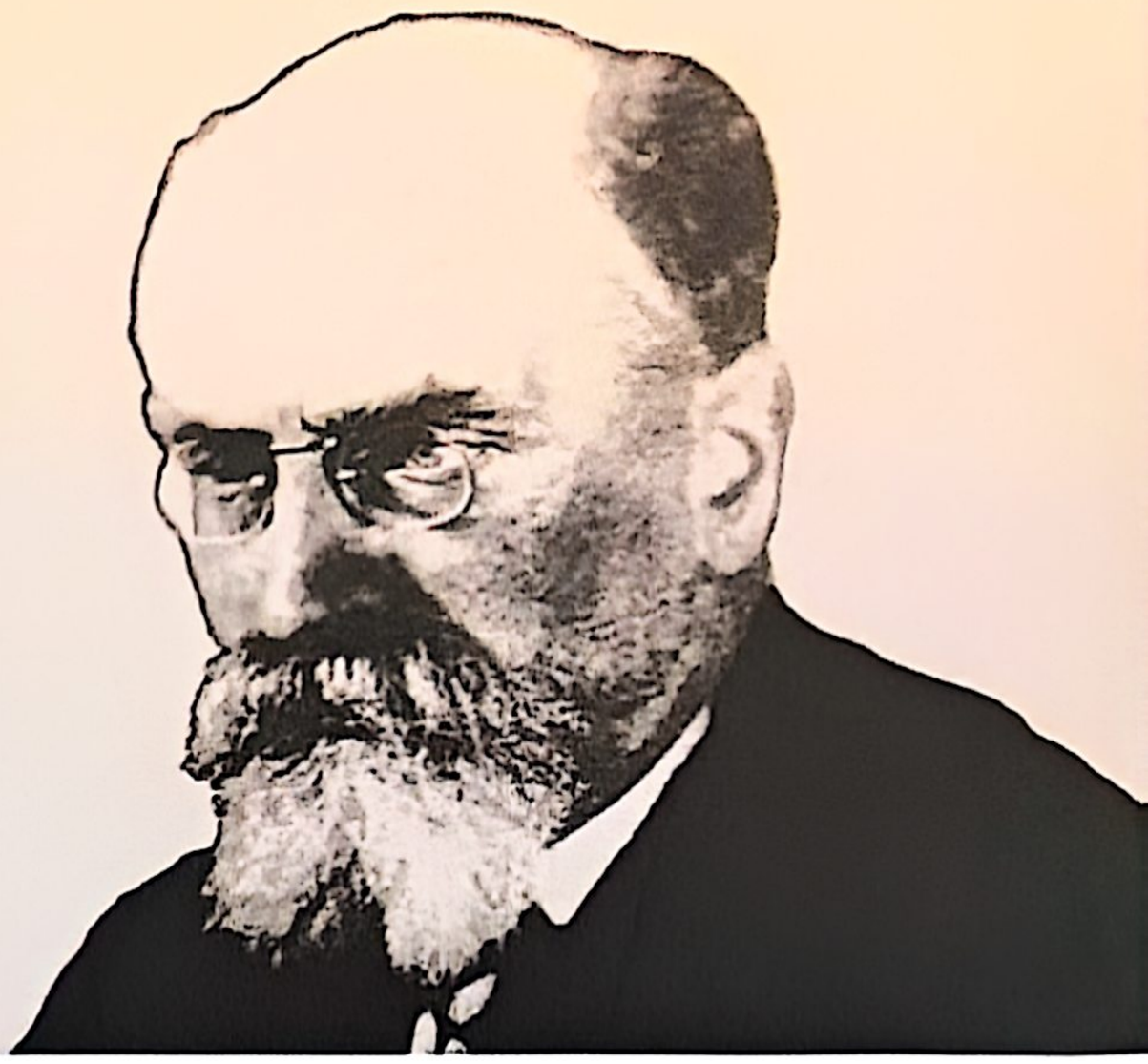
David B. Rjazanov



DOCUMENTS

THE ORIGINS OF THE FIRST INTERNATIONAL

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David B. Rjazanov

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Documents

For information about our publications please contact
Éditions Science Marxiste S.A.R.L.
10, rue Lavoisier - 93100 Montreuil-sous-Bois, France
E-mail: escmrx@wanadoo.fr - Fax: (+)33 1 49 88 79 82
http://www.sciencemarxiste.com

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Publisher's Note

When on 28 September 1864, with the participation of English, French, German, Italian, Swiss and Polish delegates, the International Working Men's Association (IWA) was founded in London's St. Martin's Hall, the total number of wage earners in the world did not exceed a few tens of millions, stabilising at below 5% of the total population of the time. They were mainly concentrated in Britain and France, besides smaller numbers in other countries of the Old Continent such as Germany and Italy. In the "New World" on the other shore of the Atlantic, the explosion of capitalism and big industry was still to come and only around 1890 would American wage earners reach 15 million. Not to mention Asia, at the time the seat of despotism and the land of "a hundred thousand villages".

This was the size of our world class when Marx in the Inaugural Address of the International Working Men's Association, written the following month, launched his historic appeal *«Proletarians of all countries, unite!»*.

Almost one hundred years later, in the mid-twentieth century, the numbers of the international proletariat verged on 300 million, out of a global population of about two and a half billion. There would be a billion wage earners around 1990 and a billion and a half in the first years of the last decade. Today, the figure stands at about two billion and, together with their families, they now account for the majority of the human race.

Throughout history, which is the history of classes and class struggles, nothing similar had occurred previously, and this huge process of proletarianisation undoubtedly constitutes the most important socio-political result, the very essence of so-called globalisation.

With the spreading of the capitalist mode of production to the whole of the *«globe»*, exactly as Marx and Engels had anticipated with rare farsightedness in their "Manifesto of the Communist Party" (1848)

> *«in the same proportion is the proletariat, the modern working class, developed—a class of labourers, who live only so long as they find work, and who find work only so long as their labour increases capital. These labourers, who must sell themselves piecemeal, are a commodity, like every other article of commerce, and are consequently exposed to all the vicissitudes of competition, to all the fluctuations of the market.»*

It is not for nothing that in the Address to the Workmen of France from the Workingmen of England, written by George Odger, the need for a joint struggle with the participation of the various proletarian sectors of all countries should have already found its reason in the fact that

> *«whenever we attempt to better our social condition by reducing the hours of toil, or by raising the price of labour, our employers threaten us with bringing over Frenchmen, Germans, Belgians, and others to do our work at a reduced rate of wages; and we are sorry to say that this has been done [...] through a want of regular and systematic communication between the industrious classes of all countries, which we hope to see speedily effected, as our principle is to bring up the wages of the ill-paid to as near a level as possible with that of those who are better remunerated, and not to allow our employers to play us off one against the other, and so drag us down to the lowest possible condition».*

Even today, that state of exploitation and oppression of human by human, the fruit of the inevitable antagonism between capital and wages within the capitalist mode of production, still remains the rule for a proletariat that in the meantime has multiplied and spread throughout the world.

An ocean of wage earners is now on the move at every latitude... a force that, to use Marx's words, possesses as never before *«one element of success»* in its *«numbers»*, but which confirms in an increasingly clear and urgent way that *«numbers only weigh on the balance when combination unites them and knowledge guides them»*.

All the evolution of history since then, with the crises and wars of the imperialist epoch, has made it even more evident that only a class coalition levelled against the effects but not the causes that give rise to these unacceptable conditions, is a necessary but insufficient struggle, and that the imperative *«guerrilla fights»* for *«a fair day's wage»* and *«for a fair day's work»* are only the premise for a *«larger movement»*, whose aim cannot but be the revolutionary aim of the *«abolition of the wages system»*.

This is why, even then, Marx reminded the delegates of the First International that *«to conquer political power has* [...] *become the great duty of the working class»*... an impossible duty without the capacity to give birth to a workers' international party able to allow our class to present itself united and autonomous, as *«a power among the powers»* in the ceaseless struggle among the imperialist powers.

To be able to do this, the indispensable premise was and still remains that of *«*[mastering] *themselves the mysteries of international politics»*. This is the proletariat's *«internationalist duty»*. Otherwise—concluded Marx a few years later in his Second Address to the International Working Men's Association on the occasion of the 1870 Franco-Prussian War—if the workers

> *«forsake their duty, if they remain passive, the present tremendous war will be but the harbinger of still deadlier international feuds, and lead in every nation to a renewed triumph over the workman by the lords of the sword, of the soil, and of capital».*

June 2014

INTRODUCTION*

David Borisovich Rjazanov's research into the origins of the First International was published in 1926 in the "Marx-Engels Archiv", the journal of the Moscow-based Marx-Engels Institute that the Bolsheviks had created two years earlier with the aim of gathering and publishing the works of the two founders of modern communism.

Since the early years of the century, Rjazanov had started to gather material and documents dealing with the history of the First International. Part of them was kept in the archives of the Second International and no one had succeeded in arranging them organically or in getting them published. One step forward was taken when the Viennese Anton Menger Foundation, for which Rjazanov worked, offered its collaboration and received books and documents. However, with the outbreak of the First World War, every project had to be postponed until the 1920s.

Hence, Rjazanov was one of the first to gain possession of and to study otherwise unused documents. He reached such results as to make the work we are now publishing in English of great historical validity, often cited by other authors, but never republished. In this regard, Maximilien Rubel wrote on the centenary of the birth of the First International:

> «If the circumstances leading to Marx's redaction of the Inaugural Address, Preamble and Provisional Rules—a body of texts that we now call "the International Charter"—are quite well known, the nature and profound inspiration of this work have not yet been the object of a serious exploration.»

On that occasion he cited Rjazanov's work, written no less than thirty-nine years before, as one of the two important books that had «tilled the soil»*; the other was published in 1963, edited by Natalia Smirnova.*

Only after Rjazanov, and in particular after the 1964 anniversary, did vaster research ensue, with further works being published; since then, essays, bibliographies and editions of the minutes of the Congresses and General Council meetings have appeared.

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* By kind permission of the editor, we have been able to reproduce the introduction to the Italian edition of Rjazanov'swork 'Alle origini della Prima Internazionale' Edizioni Lotta Comunista, Milano, 1995.

For the first time, our author publishes in his work the essential documents of the process that led to the birth of the International Working Men's Association (IWA), i.e. the First International, on 28 September 1864: the manifestos of the big British strikes in 1860, the reports of the workers who had visited the London International Exhibition (the so-called Red Pamphlets, *rich in observations about living and working conditions), the "Manifesto of the Sixty", the British trade unionists' "Address to the French Workers", the documents of the international demonstrations in support of the Polish insurgents and, finally, the detailed account of the meeting in St. Martin's Hall which saw the birth of the First International and which concludes the essay.*

Furthermore, via a careful historical reconstruction, Rjazanov dwells on the revival of the trade union organisation in England, the English workers' struggle against slavery in the American Confederate States, and the workers' solidarity with the oppressed nations. He intended to continue with the publication of documents that would have shown us the IWA's activity and Marx's actions, but we have not found anything in the "Marx-Engels Archiv" files.

The importance of Rjazanov's work does not only lie in his documentation. It also lies in the thesis that runs throughout the work and that finds a clarifying solution in its final pages: the end of the 1850s witnessed a revival of the workers' movement in Britain and France, wage claims interwove with political struggles, and the impact of the internationalist trend made itself strongly felt, but all of this was based on objective factors that are highlighted from the very beginning.

This line is far from that of other studies on the origins of the First International. It has been written too often, and summarily, that the British trade unionists, when they belonged to this organisation, were very far from communist ideas and pursued the internationalist aim only to protect themselves against the sending of strike-breakers from abroad during strikes. Rjazanov does not accept this simplification. This emerges clearly from his work when he underlines the need for an international commitment also at the level of economic struggles, or when he sketches the history of trade unionism in London and its various components.

It is not enough for him, in fact, to present the English workers as now far from the tradition of the Chartist Movement struggle of a few decades before: this belonged to the historiography that was eager to tell of strikes, struggles for the right to vote and to form and to join trade unions, alongside clashes between groups of leaders, professional jealousy, and personal enmities.

Nor was it enough for him to describe the French workers held back by the survival of a strong artisan class, entangled in the promises of "imperial socialism" and incapable of going beyond the proclamation of high ideals.

If the reality of those years were to be exhausted in these descriptions, the English and French, "co-founders" of the First International, would never have had real interests in common and the end of this organisation after only eight years of existence would have already been written in its premises. Marx's work in the First International,

from its birth to the transfer of the General Council to New York, would therefore appear to be a shortsighted forcing of the situation.

Conversely, in an essay published some years after Rjazanov's research, Jacques Rougerie again placed historical and social factors in the fore to explain the birth of a workers' internationalism at the beginning of the 1860s. However, his excessive "objectivism" led him to write:

> «The French example shows the transition from the workers' practical experience to real theory [...] It calls for the theoretical, but not historical, repudiation of the declaration that was the creed of social democracy as a whole, the golden rule restated by Lenin, that the working class is bound, spontaneously, to be trade unionist and reformist, and that it must be taught socialism from outside. Rudimental socialism may emerge from the workers' praxis [...]»

Precisely, "rudimental socialism": in France, it was incapable of going beyond syndicalism and, in spite of its best exponents, ended up collapsing in the face of the First World War. Furthermore, if this line had been followed, Marx's work would now seem superfluous.

On the contrary, Rjazanov saw the emergence of a workers' internationalism—which, however, was incapable of providing itself with a scientifically-based programme—from real social foundations: contradictory English and French capitalist development, economic expansion and crisis, the intensification of merchandise and labour trade among the nations, big strikes, and the interest roused by the great international questions of the moment.

It was in this context that he placed Marx's fundamental work, stating this clearly in his conclusions: the IWA, born in St. Martin's Hall on 28 September 1864, was, in and of itself, nothing more than a meeting point and a debating society.

Apart from clarifying Marx's role—which is of the greatest importance for the understanding of Rjazanov's approach to his work— Rougerie's essay still holds a certain interest, and not only because he ended up admitting that

> «the detailed study of the reports of the General Council meetings... allows us, via decisive proofs, to appreciate the considerable role played by Marx in the International, of which he was the great, indisputable, leading force. His views about the evolution of the contemporary workers' movement and its future prospects are undoubtedly the most vivid, the most acute, and, for the historian, the most stimulating.»

This interest also springs from the fact that the author maintained that the end of the First International had been determined by the petering out of the very conditions that had made its birth possible: they had ebbed with the formation of the state system that characterised Europe in the forty years leading up to the First World War. According to Rougerie, the IWA died on the threshold of what we may call the "the new nationalist political cycle", when the Italian question had been resolved and German unity brought about "by fire and sword". Only at that moment would all the limitations and delays that weighed on the English and French working classes reach their breaking point.

If this thesis is accepted, the judgement to be made will be about the duration, extent and depth of the trends at work in the early 1850s. Although they made a huge impact, they were, therefore, limited and of too short a duration for Marx's work to take root and finally bear more lasting fruit.

Furthermore, we understand that Marx's attempt occurred at a particular historical moment and that, acting on utterly real trends, he worked for the more dynamic part of the workers to espouse scientific communism. This has not been overlooked by the more attentive historiography. It has recognised that, in the IWA documents elaborated by Marx, even when they are anonymous, attention is always paid to the documented observation of the specific fact alongside the evaluation of its prospects: the very nature of strategic analysis and the essential task of the "political educator" who always links the present struggle to the consciousness of the future revolutionary prospect lie in this.

And finally, how many adherents did the First International have? Asking this question in the introduction to an essay devoted to the origins of this organisation is useful if it helps us to understand its dimensions.

The proceedings of an international conference, held in Paris on the occasion of the IWA centenary, give us the answer: at its peak (1867), it had about 50,000 adherents in England, while the trade unions had 800,000. For Switzerland, there were 6,000 adherents at the most. And for France, Rougerie estimated the number of its members at some tens of thousands when the IWA was at its strongest (1869-70), an estimate that is in any case very far from the 200-300,000 mentioned in police reports after the Paris Commune and by a number of contemporaries.

A different research into the matter gives completely different results, at least for France. This was co-ordinated by Jean Maitron and presented in the preface to the fourth volume of his monumental "Dictionnaire biographique du mouvement ouvrier français".

Maitron had searched in the police, court, etc. archives for the names of "sure" adherents, of whom certain traces of political commitment had remained, and had arrived at the total number of 2,091, about half of them in the Paris region, where they were distributed in 54 districts and 72 local trade union branches. It goes without saying, and is easily understandable, that these adherents, with police records or brought to trial, are the most prominent, the ones that carried out more regular activity over an extended period of time, and the best-known by the other workers: in short, the cadres.

Maitron's comment is interesting. The IWA, he said, is Janus-faced. On the one hand, it was a symbol of emancipation for great masses of workers; organised in their Chambres Syndicales, *they acclaimed it and drew near to it at the moment of struggles and big strikes. But on the other, it was an organisation in which only a minority were really militant members:*

> «The First International had a mass audience and in this sense its influence spread to hundreds of thousands of workers, but it was never, at any moment, a mass political party.»

David Borisovich Rjazanov was born in 1870 and died, according to the editors of Lenin's "Complete Works", in 1938. As a nineteen-year-old student, he organised a Marxist study circle in Odessa. Arrested, he was sentenced to five years' imprisonment, emigrated, and at the moment of the 1903 Bolshevik-Menshevik scission, did not take sides. In 1906, in Vienna, he started his study of the history of the First International.

The first imperialist war saw him adopt an internationalist position. In 1917, on the outbreak of the Revolution, he returned to Russia and was accepted as a militant at the 6th Bolshevik Party Congress. He was appointed chairman of the St. Petersburg trade unions. Then, in 1924, the party charged him with founding the Moscow-based Marx-Engels Institute, of which he was the director until 1931, the year in which the Stalinists removed him from all his offices.

Subsequently, there is no longer any trace of his activities. He was probably silently eliminated at the time of the great anti-Bolshevik trials. «Rjazanov died while being transported to Saratov, where Stalin's vendetta had exiled him[...]» wrote in 1933 Trotsky, who, during his time of exile to Siberia, had started to collaborate with Rjazanov as the translator and proof-reader of the Russian edition of Marx's works. At the time, the news turned out to be a false report.

Publisher's Note

The present volume contains all of Rjazanov's text as published in the "Marx-Engels Archiv", 1926. We have added the conclusion reached by the author in the article "La fondation de la I Internationale", published in the journal of the executive committee of the III International ("L'Internationale Communiste") in October 1919, to which explicit reference is made in the first lines of the essay. Immediately afterwards there is the "Inaugural Address of the International Working Men's Association", written by Marx in October 1864. In the appendix, we have put some passages from Marx and Engels' correspondence that illustrate the judgements they made about those events.*

Finally, we have considered it useful to divide the text into paragraphs preceded by short summaries of the main points. The most important editorial comments, aimed to make the text more understandable for the English reader, are to be found mainly in the footnotes, although a few are incorporated into the text between square brackets.

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* Following their initial publication in 1919 and 1926 respectively, Rjazanov's two studies on the founding of the First International were published only, as far as we have been able to discover, in France, in 1965 (*La Première Internationale.* Numéro spécial du "Mouvement Social", préparé sous la direction de J. Rougerie et M. Rubel, Paris, Éditions Ouvrières) and in Italy (David B. Rjazanov, *Alle origini della Prima Internazionale*, Edizioni Lotta Comunista, Milano, 1995). Here we present the first English language edition of these studies.

MARX-ENGELS ARCHIV

ZEITSCHRIFT DES

MARX-ENGELS-INSTITUTS

IN MOSKAU

HERAUSGEGEBEN

VON

D. RJAZANOV

I. BAND

MARX-ENGELS-ARCHIV
VERLAGSGESELLSCHAFT M. B. H.
FRANKFURT A. M.

David B. Rjazanov

Concerning the History of the First International

This study regards the history of the First International and the part played in it by Marx alone at the beginning, i.e. until 1870, and subsequently together with Engels. This first draft, of which some of the results had already been used for my article, published in "L'Internationale Communiste" (October 1919), aims to carry out a detailed research into the causes that triggered that reaction on the part of the workers that led to the convocation of the famous meeting in St. Martin's Hall on 28 September 1864 and the developments that ensued.

Only after explaining how the constitution of the International Working Men's Association (IWA) General Council occurred and which elements prevailed in it, will we be able to give a precise definition of the origin and nature of the programme and Provisional Rules formulated by Marx. In the course of our research we will find ourselves face to face with something that is more than a legend—nothing short of out-and-out fantasies. The history of the First International abounds with them.

We apologise to the reader if we have to go into a myriad details. It had long been necessary for us to *«realise exactly[...] how the proletarians transform their organisation as a class before our very eyes»*. This is impossible without a detailed analysis of the concrete programme or a meticulous list of all the factors that led to the development of the proletariat's class organisation on a national and international scale. We shall therefore dwell particularly on the so-called antecedents of the First International.

The workers' movement in England in the decade of economic prosperity and the political reaction subsequent to the 1847-1848 crisis and revolutions.

In 1852, the Communist League, the first international communist organisation, which had coined the slogan of the international union of the working class *«Workers of all countries, unite!»*, ceased all activity.

Many years went by before the workers' movement recovered its strength, giving birth to the working class's first international organisation: the IWA, i.e. the First International. These were years of political reaction and of unprecedented economic prosperity, barely slowed down by the Crimean War and spreading to all the European countries, including Russia. This formed a generation without direct experience of revolutionary struggles, one that was shaken out of its indifference only by the 1857-58 world crisis.

The 1859 about-turn had again put on the agenda a series of national and political questions that had already been posed during the 1848 revolution and that had remained unresolved. The democratic movement took off again throughout the world. From 1859, the abolition of slavery in North America and of serfdom in Russia became its immediate aims.

In England, the Chartist Movement—after Ernest Jones's failed attempt to turn it into a class movement—lost its last exponent in 1858 and ceased to exist as a single political organisation. The workers' movement broke up completely. The old trend towards fragmentation into single independent movements, with different programmes and aims, and the creation of different rival organisations—the trend from which Chartism itself had suffered—prevailed again. Every trace of the single workers' movement that united all the forces in itself disappeared.

There remained only individual sects, each with its own characteristics: Christian Socialists, secularists, rationalists, moderates, etc. These sects also absorbed the remaining members of the old

Owenite and Chartist organisations. Even the Urquhartians (a mixture of Tory and democratic elements that was the protagonist of a hard-fought struggle against secret diplomacy) welcomed some of the former Owenites and Chartists into the Foreign Affairs Committees that played a significant role in the 1850s.

Political conditions allowed the development of those forms of the workers' movement that were not directly opposed by the ruling classes and that benefited from the collaboration of the bourgeois philanthropists.

The heirs of the socialist movement headed by Robert Owen had thus established a solid position as early as the 1850s. The co-operatives, which had further expanded thanks to the *Industrial and Provident Societies Act* of 30 June 1852, undoubtedly played a leading role—with their Rochdale pioneers in the fore—in the various activities of the working class in that period. The general aims that the co-operatives had set themselves (the elimination of trading profit and the planning of production and consumption within the sphere of the capitalist economic system) were not achieved. Nevertheless, their members were filled with such enthusiasm that it spurred on the other workers and led a number of men, of both proletarian and bourgeois origins, from philosophical ideals to

co-operative circles. A great deal of energy was devoted to the founding of production and consumption consortiums. We need only think that almost half of the existing consumption consortiums were founded in the 1850s and early 1860s. The *Co-operative Wholesale Society* for wholesale trade was set up in 1863.

Equally favourable were the conditions for the development of friendly societies, favoured by the Acts that had improved the old 1846 Act in 1850 and 1855. The consolidation of the main English friendly societies—*Independent Order of Old Fellows*, *Manchester Unity*, *Ancient Order of Foresters* and *Hearts of Oak Benefit Society*—took place at that time. According to a calculation made by Nash Stephenson, the total number of members of all these associations in 1859 was at least 3,052,000, annual fees amounted to £4,980,000, and their accumulated capital stood at £11,300,000.

The workers' cultural aspirations also freed themselves from the various fetters that had chained them in the 1840s. The 11 August 1854 Act eliminated the limitations for the associations that promoted popular education. With the collaboration of the "Christian Socialists", 1854 saw the foundation in London of the *Working Men's College*, which then became the *Working Men's Free University*, still in existence thanks to the ceaseless activity of the English positivists Frederick Harrison and, subsequently, Edward Spencer Beesly. Besides the positivists, excellent representatives of natural science such as Tyndall, Huxley and even Furnivall—the famous English expert on Shakespeare—who then, like Beesly, associated with Marx and his family, also taught there. The new institution gave powerful impulse to other similar institutions for workers, who did not only attend them as students, but also took part in their organisation and administration.

A significant part of the British working class obtained the indispensable prerequisite to giving the workers the possibility of cultural growth—reduction in working hours—as early as the 1850s. The great conquest of the English workers, the Ten Hour Act of 8 June 1847, became a fait accompli only with the 5 August 1850 Act, after three years of attempts on the part of the employers to make it ineffective. It is common knowledge that this Act led to a general reduction in working hours, given the close correlation between men's working hours and those of women and children.

It is true that initially it became effective only in the textile industry. However, as Marx says,

> *«the principle had triumphed with its victory in those great branches of industry which form the most characteristic creation of the modern mode of production. Their wonderful development from 1853 to 1860, hand-in-hand with the physical and moral regeneration of the factory workers, struck the most purblind»* (*"Capital"*, *Vol. I*).

And the workers in the other branches of capitalist industry waited only for a favourable opportunity to obtain the benefits of shorter working hours also for themselves.

Only for the trade union movement were the 1850s rather unfavourable. The reaction that set in after 1848 hit the trade unions particularly hard. They were merely tolerated by the legislator (tolerance with very arbitrary limits, to tell the truth) and led an almost illegal existence, succeeding in surviving only via a gallant struggle for their organisation.

These circumstances favoured the "pacific" and "legislative" positions. The friendly societies replaced strike pay. The old trend of the guilds that had united the workers according to their trade in order to obtain advantages limited to that particular category, irrespective of the workers of the other categories, prevailed. The favourable economic situation proved to be the ideal soil.

Although the five or six years that followed the great 1852 lockout were a phase of peaceful development for some particular associations, they were a period without much interest for the student of the trade union movement in general. The years of serious economic depression (1846-1849) were followed by seven years of constant commercial expansion that offered no chance for a generalised reduction in working hours.

The reaction to the ambitious 1834 trade union plans continued to discourage trade union action on a national scale. The complete failure of the operative engineers' strike, followed in 1853 by the disastrous strike of the Preston cotton textile workers for a ten per cent wage rise, by the equally vain struggle of the Kidderminster carpet-weavers and the noble but useless fight of the Dowlais metalworkers, increased the trade unions' reluctance to make union demands on a vast scale.

Another circumstance intervened in all this. The successes of the co-operative movement had induced a number of trade unions to attempt to form production associations. In their "History of Trade Unionism", Beatrice and Sidney Webb write that

> *«numberless small undertakings were started by operative engineers, cabinetmakers, tailors, bootmakers, and hatters in the Metropolis, and in other large industrial centres, and for a few years the Executives and Committees of the various Unions vied with each other in recommending co-operative production to their members.»*

Although these experiments ended in failure, for some years numerous members left the trade unions.

Only the operative engineers, who had founded a *Unified League* in 1851 and who, notwithstanding the great 1851-52 lockout, had made every effort to enlarge their organisation, increased their members, as did also the foundry workers and the bricklayers. The prolonged prosperity favoured the peaceful trends among the workers.

But suddenly, after 1857, the situation changed

> *«The era of strikes which set in with the contraction of trade in 1857 proved how fallacious had been these hopes.» (B. and S. Webb, op. cit.).*

While in the first half of the 1850s the most important struggles took place in the textile and engineering industries, now two new branches in which the industrial model had taken great strides forward—the clothing and the building industries—took the lead. As soon as craftwork yielded to the aggressive expansion of industrial capitalism, the reduction in working hours in these old productive branches became a matter of necessity. The attempts to prevent the introduction of machines were useless.

To be able to carry on a winning struggle against the industrialists, the workers were obliged to organise themselves as unions in a more energetic way. Hence, the struggle for the reduction in working hours went hand in hand with the struggle for the right to form trade unions.

The resumption of strikes in England and the struggle for the reduction in working hours. The new trade union organisations and the birth of the London Trades Union Council. The leaders of the movement and their future role in the First International.

The most important strike of this period was the strike of the London building industry. The 1850s were characterised by frantic activity in the building industry. The huge increase in the urban population led to a growing demand for housing. In London—2,679,000 inhabitants in 1851, 3,217, 000 in 1861—the building sector had now changed into a branch of capitalist production: it no longer built houses to order, but produced hundreds of houses in the expanding districts as finished goods for the market.

> *«To what extent capitalist production has revolutionised the building of houses in London—says Marx in Volume II of "Capital"— is shown by the testimony of a builder before the banking committee of 1857. When he was young, he said, houses were generally built to order and the payments made in instalments to the contractor as certain stages of the building were being completed. Very little was built on speculation. Contractors used to assent to such operations mainly to keep their men in constant employment and thus hold them together. In the last forty years all that has changed. Very little is now built to order. Anyone wanting a new house picks one from among those built on speculation or still in process of construction. The builder no longer works for his customers but for the market. Like every other industrial capitalist he is compelled to have finished articles in the market. While formerly a builder had perhaps three or four houses building at a time for speculation, he must now buy a large plot of ground (which in continental language means rent it for ninety-nine years, as a rule), build from 100 to 200 houses on it, and thus embark on an enterprise which exceeds his resources twenty to fifty times. The funds are procured through*

mortgaging and the money is placed at the disposal of the contractor as the buildings proceed. Then, if a crisis comes along and interrupts the payment of the advance instalments, the entire enterprise generally collapses. At best, the houses remain unfinished until better times arrive; at the worst they are sold at auction for half their cost. Without speculative building, and on a large scale at that, no contractor can get along today. The profit from just building is extremely small. His main profit comes from raising the ground-rent, from careful selection and skilled utilisation of the building terrain. It is by this method of speculation anticipating the demand for houses that almost the whole of Belgravia and Tyburnia, and the countless thousands of villas round London have been built.»

The increased intensity of work was a consequence of this acceleration in production. The entrepreneurs insured themselves against eventual mistakes in speculation only through the increased exploitation of the building workers. In fact, although they were willing to grant small pay rises even after relatively short strikes, they were utterly opposed to any reduction in working hours. And it was precisely the intensification of work that forced the building workers to make even stronger demands for a reduction in working hours.

After long negotiations between the entrepreneurs and the building workers (led, from June 1858 to July 1859, by the Building Trades Conference with George Potter as Secretary), the strike broke out. A general strike did not seem opportune and the workers decided to strike company by company. The building entrepreneurs responded with a lockout.

The Building Trades Conference called a meeting of all the building workers in Hyde Park on 3 August. Cremer, the future IWA General Secretary, formulated the following resolution:

«This meeting regrets the position taken by the employers. Their attitude seems geared to widening the already existing rift, to trampling on the humanitarian principle that gave birth to, and still animates, the Nine-Hour Movement. Since the pledge that they want to force us to take by signing the document they are thinking of submitting to us would deprive us of our spirit as free men and would reduce us to the condition of serfs, we are firmly resolved to have recourse to every moral force of resistance, and we commit ourselves to using all the constitutional rules of law to bring the Nine-Hour Movement to a victorious conclusion.»

The resolution was carried unanimously after Potter stated that the workers of the most important British towns had declared themselves in favour of the nine-hour movement and would support the strike.

The main claim, as set out in the 3 June document, reads as follows:

«Reduction of the working hours from ten to nine a day with current wages.»

The entrepreneurs belonging to the *Master Builders' Society* not only rejected this demand categorically, but also made a declaration of war on all the workers who belonged to a trade union: they pledged that they would not hire any worker who refused to sign a "document" in which he declared that he was not a trade union member.

The British trade unions kept their promise and took the London building workers' story to heart. Numerous meetings were held and the workers of other branches of industry made great efforts to help the strikers. Aid arrived from every part of the United Kingdom: from England, Ireland and Scotland. This strike kept the English working class in agitation for over six months, until 6 February 1860. The building workers also appealed to public opinion.

During the meetings, their representatives and the members of the committee that had been set up by the delegates of various categories—Cremer and Odger in particular—presented the workers' demands to the public and sharply criticised the official exponents of the national economy who had sided with the entrepreneurs and countered the workers' demands with the theory of the labour fund. *«If economics is against us»*—Cremer exclaimed during a meeting in Hyde Park—*«then we will be against them»*. The whole struggle was considered as the struggle of the working class's political economy against the capitalist class's political economy.

The great struggle, *«the key episode of the struggle between capital and labour»*, as Chernyshevsky called this strike, ended in a compromise. The entrepreneurs renounced the so-called "document" that should have banned the workers' trade union organisation, but, for the moment, the workers also renounced their main demand.

Nevertheless, this strike marks an about-turn in the history of the English workers' movement. The solidarity expressed by the workers gained the upper hand over the old trade sectarianism. The struggle for the right to form trade unions also swept along the more peaceful unions. The Trades Councils, charged with looking after the common interests of the different categories and uniting their strength in the struggle against the capitalists, emerged from the Trades Committees, created during this strike to gather funds for the striking building workers in many towns (including London). In the course of the Trades Committees and Trade Councils' activity there emerged a generation of propagandists and organisers who will be present at all the great working class demonstrations of the 1860s and who will play a leading role in the First International.

The London Trades Council held its first meeting on 10 July 1860. Its elected members were: T. Hayes (Ropemakers), W. Burn (Brickmakers), D. Develin (Cordwainers), W.R. Cremer (Carpenters and Joiners), W. Mickeson (Hatters), T. Baulsom (Sawmill Workers), and Tom Jones (Tin Plate Workers). The latter was appointed Secretary. They were therefore members of the building and textile industries. The representatives of the operative engineers, bookbinders and type compositors, and metalworkers would join them later.

As soon as it had been founded, the Trades Council hastened to publish a list of trade union addresses in order to facilitate communications and contacts. This demonstrates how strongly it felt the need to maintain and expand the relations that had sprung up among the unions during the building workers' strike. In its appeal to all the organisations requesting help in this activity, the importance of the collection of statistical data on unionisation and strikes is underlined, in the hope

> *«that the aim of more immediate and efficient communications between the trade unions will be accepted with the same spirit that inspired our efforts and has guided and sustained them so far; that the result may be the strengthening of unity, sympathy and fraternity among our country's workers».*

The list published by the London Trades Council allows us to make an interesting evaluation of the trade union world of the time. The trade union movement was extremely fragmented. According to often-incomplete data—as the authors of the list of addresses themselves underline—there were more than 1,600 trade unions in 405 localities. In London, for example, there were 250 trade union organisations: over 20 in the footwear industry alone, without counting the branches of the amalgamated unions, and just as many for the different branches of the building sector.

The lessons of the 1859-60 strike acted as a stimulus not only to the amalgamation of the trade unions into urban unions, but also to the amalgamation of whole categories on a national scale. The example given by the Amalgamated *Society of Engineers* and the Operative Bricklayers' Society was too clear not to invite emulation. The carpenters organised themselves into an amalgamated society in June 1860. Its first Secretary was S. Lea; after his resignation, Robert Applegarth, the former Secretary of its Sheffield branch, was elected in 1862. In London, however, as well as this trade union, other organisations in competition with the national amalgamated union, such as the *Operative House Carpenters' and Joiners' Society* and the *General Union of Carpenters*, both backed by George Potter, stayed alive among the carpenters.

In general, the local interests and selfishness of each category were still strong and it was not easy to broaden the narrow horizons of the numerous trade unions. This became evident in the course of the great strike in the spring of 1861. Its organisers had decided to make the most of the favourable moment: the building trade was suffering from a lack of workers for the preliminary work on the imminent International Exhibition. The aim they set themselves was once more a reduction in working hours, i.e. the conquest of the nine-hour working day. But the situation in which this demand was to be made was exacerbated by the intervention of the government, which attempted to use the Royal Engineers in favour of the entrepreneurs.

The workers' theses were discussed in numerous articles and their defenders—notably Beesly and Harrison—supported their demands in letters to the major newspapers, and strongly protested against the government's interference in favour of the entrepreneurs.

It was George Potter who once again led this struggle. In the manifesto that was published—probably not formulated by George Potter, but signed by him—the demand for a reduction of working hours is expressed in a very combative way, with marked attacks on the entrepreneurs. No appeal was made to justice. Only the facts were presented, in the hope that they would be accurately weighed up.

Regarding the huge growth in the trade and income of those years, the question was: *«Who does this increased wealth go to? Certainly not to us.»* If capitalist competition tends towards the prolongation of the working day and increased workloads, it is useless to appeal to the capitalists' hearts. *«Capital knows neither limits nor compassion.»* The tone in which the capitalists were addressed was peremptory:

> *«Sirs, we are not beasts. They that sow the wind shall reap the whirlwind. You treat us harshly, and yet you expect us to be mild. We are not beasts; we can act with an aim. We do not want to be mere tools, and so we rise up in defence of our cause. We do not want to be mere tools, and so we rise up in defence of our interests. It is clear that coercive measures will prove useless, since strikes are spreading. We do not appeal to religious motivations because they have shown themselves to be utterly useless; neither do we appeal to humanitarian feelings because they are of little importance in comparison with profit. But we appeal precisely to the question of profit itself.*
> *The capitalists are playing a losing game on positions that are in sharp contrast with their own interests if they adopt a stance opposing the workers' demands. Not only the soil but also the workers yield good fruit only if they are cultivated wisely. Nevertheless, both require the alternation of work and rest to develop fruitfully. Facts and science say that it is better to till the soil than to starve to death, but also that a field that is not left fallow when it should be becomes worked out. Need I give any other practical examples? And yet we fear that this appeal will fall on deaf ears. We will have to resort to different means to improve our conditions than those that capitalism seems to propose.»*

The declaration was summed up in seven points:

> *«The facts demonstrate the following:*
> *1) On average, the working classes live less than half as long as the propertied class.*
> *2) Their high death rate is due to overwork, unfavourable living conditions and work-related habits.*
> *3) Their high death rate derives from poor economic conditions.*
> *4) Any general improvement is impossible without reducing working hours and increasing wages.*
> *5) There are ample margins in the growth of wealth with respect to the population to allow the reduction of working hours, pay rises, and the implementation of means for the workers' higher levels of material and intellectual life, while at the same time guaranteeing a sufficient return on capital.*

6) Wherever such experiments have been carried out, above all the reduction in working hours, it has invariably been the case that wealth and economic production increased, wages increased, the average life span lengthened, the level of education rose, and peace and order notably improved, while, and this is deplorable,
7) capitalists and employers, as a class, have invariably used every means at their disposal to oppose the working class demands that would lead to social progress.»

The spirit of this declaration, the emphasis placed on the working class's general claims, and the knowledge that the building workers represented all the English workers in their struggle for a reduction in working hours, again ensured that they had the support of all the trade unions. And this solidarity helped them to overcome the obstacles, i.e. the disagreements that set the pavers and bricklayers against the carpenters, forming a major impediment to the development of a united struggle. This time, however, the strike was crowned with success. The result was the establishing of a normal working day of nine and a half hours.

As soon as it was set up, the London Trades Council mobilised all its forces in support of the building workers' demands. It was this Council that organised all the action against the use of the army to protect strike-breakers. A meeting of the delegates of all the London trade unions, organised by the Trades Council, elected a delegation for negotiations with the government. Its members included Edwin Coulson, William Cremer, George Howell, Henry Martin, John Nieass, and George Odger. We will meet them all again later in the history of the First International.

One of the most important consequences of the second building workers' strike was the foundation of new trade unionist newspapers and of the greatest workers' newspaper of the 1860s, "The Bee-Hive". This newspaper was not founded personally by George Potter, as Beatrice and Sidney Webb state erroneously. Right after the end of the second building workers' strike, in October 1861, the trade union leaders decided to found a newspaper that should serve as the informative organ of the unions themselves. With this aim in mind, the *Trades Newspaper Company (Limited)* was set up. We find a number of representatives of the different trade unions in the list of backers. George Potter was charged with directing this initiative. At the beginning, George Trupp was appointed editor and, subsequently, Robert Hartwell, a former Chartist. From the very beginning, the newspaper set itself out to be the official organ of the London Trades Council, and its "declared aim" was to report the activities of the trade unions and the other workers' associations excluded from the columns of the newspapers of the profit-driven publishing houses and the newspapers of the bourgeoisie.

Besides its official nature as a trade unionist newspaper, "The Bee-Hive" also played a kind of political role within the working class. It took part in the 1860s' debate, not always in agreement with the positions of

other leaders of the London workers, and sometimes in outright contrast with them. Potter, undeniably capable as an organiser and administrator, used his weight in the *Trades Newspaper Company* to influence "The Bee-Hive" line. He was the most important leader of the local trade unions, of the group called the "Potter faction", as opposed to the "Ogden faction", backed by the amalgamated unions on a national scale. In early 1864, this struggle broke out right across the board and "The Bee-Hive" came into conflict with the Trades Council.

Until 1865 "The Bee-Hive" remained the only not exclusively trade unionist workers' newspaper in London. Numerous exponents of British positivism— Frederick Harrison and Edward Beesly in particular— collaborated with it, writing comments on topical political and trade union issues. The most active collaborator from the workers' circles was Thomas Dunning, the then Secretary-General and editor of the newspaper for the members of the *London Consolidated Society of Journeymen Bookbinders*, an old comrade-in-arms of the Chartists Lovett and Hartwell. In the first years of its existence, "The Bee-Hive" had the backing of almost all the trade unions and the Trades Council, which had just been set up—as we have seen—with the crucial contribution of the representatives of the new and smaller London associations.

Nevertheless, the trend towards the unification of the trade union organisations worked at both an urban and a national level. This led to a struggle between two trends, the localist and the centralist. After the carpenters it was the turn of the painters, who also founded an *Amalgamated Society of Operative Painters*. The new trend also prevailed in the Trades Council with the victory of the new centralist principle in the footwear industry, on the occasion of the London conference that decided to found an *Amalgamated Society of Cordwainers* in January 1863.

The leading role was played by Odger, a fervent champion of national union in the trade union movement. He had become the Trades Council's Secretary in 1862. Hence, in this instance, the weight of the big trade unions and of those amalgamated on a national scale gradually became determining. But which organisations constituted the legitimate representation of the single industrial branches? And who was to direct the struggle in the case of strikes, which often required the support of all the other trade unions? These questions very soon led to fierce conflicts.

And the struggle between the various trends in the Trades Council was not only in the trade union field. From the very beginning, it was also impossible to avoid taking a stand over the various political issues: this often caused further attrition. Nor was it the case—as Beatrice and Sidney Webb state—of the opposition of the smaller or local trade unions to the line of those that were bigger and unified on a national scale and

that were trying to change the Council into a tool for their new tactic, i.e. participation in general political action.

It was, in fact, precisely some trade unions with a long tradition and organised on a national scale, such as the printers, that protested against any kind of political action. The "Amalgamated Society of Engineers", which had played a very minor role with respect to the building and textile workers during all the actions of the 1860s, was also opposed to political struggle. Energetic agitation for political reforms sometimes clashed with the great prudence of those in charge of the trade union struggles, while those who gathered round Potter were more eager for trade union strikes and more active as regards political questions.

Controversies also arose among the trade union organisations over the laws concerning the trade unions' legal position. This is what Beatrice and Sidney Webb describe as opposition or non-opposition to the laws that, according to a part of the trade unions, would hinder their free development.

All these internal struggles, the struggle between "pure" and "political" trade unionists, between "localist" and "centralist", between the advocates of trade union legislation and their adversaries (who were opposed to any interference by the state in the trade unions' inner affairs) are part of the history of the British trade unions in the 1860s. They very often appeared to be a kind of personal struggle between the various leaders, a struggle between Potter's party and Odger's. Nevertheless, it would be a huge mistake to attribute those struggles to a petty interplay of intrigues on the part of one side or another, or of Potter or Odger, reducing them to the narrow framework of an arbitrarily constructed pattern.

The fresh wave of strikes and the closer union that ensued also had positive effects for the food industry workers. Many meetings were held and numerous petitions were sent to parliament, where the situation of the bakers' boys was debated. The Trades Council also supported this action and the bakers' leaders, Blackmore and Dick, emerged as active members.

The new 1859-1860 movement had yet another consequence. The entrepreneurs, who always referred to foreign competition in their opposition to the trade unions, began threatening to import cheap labour from abroad. As demonstrated by the German workers' competition in the fields of tailoring and bread-making, this was no empty threat. It is true that the English workers succeeded in obtaining an increase in real wages thanks to the reduction in their working hours, even without direct increases in their daily wages, but the competition of workers from the continent threatened to make wages and working conditions fall back to the level existing on the continent.

In the world market of the time, wage differences were much more marked than they are in the present phase. The struggle for equal working conditions, which was already one of the main tasks of the trade unions within the country, was to spread to the continent, too. International propaganda for trade union unity therefore became a vital necessity for the English workers. There emerged the pressing need in their more advanced circles to establish relations with the continental workers, and especially with the French, Belgian and German.

The relations of the English working class movement with the French workers and craftsmen. The role of German political refugees in London. The echoes of the big international questions.

The second big building workers' strike had a great propagandistic effect. The first had already caused a great deal of comment in the American and continental press, including the Russian, but the second caused an even greater stir. It is therefore highly probable that a number of contacts were made between English and French workers during this strike. Howell* maintains that the Paris workers sent the English workers not only a message of support, but also financial aid (and on this occasion he mentions Tolain). Unfortunately, there is no confirmation of this specific fact in other sources.

Nevertheless, even if Howell was mistaken about the role played by Tolain, there are other proofs of the attention aroused among the Paris workers by the English building workers' struggle. The English positivists themselves, who defended the interests of the striking workers so strenuously, acted as go-betweens. James Winstanley, for example, made a speech at the *Société Positiviste de Paris* in August 1861. A member of the association, Fabien Magnin, a carpenter, published the "Lettre sur la grève des ouvriers du bâtiment à Londres", also translated into English.

The most efficient means of communication was through the political refugees of various nationalities who had settled in London. The German proletarian émigrés' frame of reference at the time was the *Kommunistischer Arbeiterbildungsverein***, whose members were mainly recruited among skilled artisans (tailors, artists and watchmakers), active in the British trade union movement.

Most French workers had emigrated to America or had returned to France after the 1856 and 1859 amnesties. At the time, therefore, the representatives of the revolutionary intelligentsia were the majority among

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* In 1878.

** K.A.B. = Communist Workingmen's Mutual Improvement Association, the association of the German communists who were political exiles in London.

the French émigrés [in London], as they were also among the Poles and Italians. Very soon, the political events of the first half of the 1860s gave the Polish, and particularly the Italian, political refugees an importance and popularity among the English workers that was completely unrelated to the number of proletarians in their ranks. Only among the German exiles do we meet workers such as Eccarius, Lesner, Lochner, Pfander and Kaub, who came into direct contact with the English workers and their leaders.

It was not, however, only the requirements of the trade union struggle that [rekindled the British workers'] interest in their continental comrades, an interest that had gradually faded after the 1848 revolution. The change in the political situation from 1858 on was also very important: this change, together with the revival of political activity in the country, reawakened the English workers' international sentiments, turning their attention towards the political events of the rest of the world.

The English workers' direct participation in the country's legislative activity was impossible, since they were not represented in parliament. They could, however, use means outside parliament and organise meetings and rallies to bring pressure to bear on parliament from the outside, methods that they had already used with success. During the Crimean War, they had fervently supported the anti-Russian policy. Hence, when the struggle of the oppressed nations picked up again at the end of the 1850s, it met with an outpouring of sympathy among the English workers. The cause of Italian independence was viewed with particular favour.

As late as 1859, the Italian question did not arouse great enthusiasm. This was a moment when relations between England and France were very tense. Palmerston's attempt to bring in an anti-conspiracy law against the exiles led to the defeat of his ministry thanks to the rowdy demonstrations outside the Houses of Parliament. On 19 February 1858, he had to resign. The London trial of Simon Bernard, the accomplice of Orsini*, gave his defenders the opportunity to denounce the action of the Napoleonic police, and the prisoner at the bar was acquitted by the English court. The French army posed an alarming threat, and people in Britain again expressed their fear of invasion. The volunteer movement, born as a consequence of this fear, also met with the workers' approval.

Given the circumstances, Napoleon III's "liberating" mission in Italy could not meet with much sympathy and the Peace of Villafranca, which envisaged a confederation under the honorary presidency of the Pope, instead of a unified Italy, aroused indignation in England, France, and Italy itself. There was strong public pressure and even Palmerston—re-elected prime minister in June 1859 subsequent to the worsening of

* The perpetrator of an attempt on Napoleon III in January 1858.

the international situation—was careful not to give Napoleon any assistance, even at a merely formal level.

Events took a different turn when, right after France annexed Nice and Savoy, Garibaldi began his Expedition of the Thousand in May 1860, landing at Marsala, in Sicily. All the vicissitudes of this event were followed with feverish tension, and Garibaldi became the most popular figure in the England of the time.

He was celebrated and admired as both the liberator of his people and the adversary of the Papacy. We find Odger, Cremer, Charles Murray, Trimlett, Hartwell and Potter among the most passionate defenders of the Italian cause. It was they, together with the radicals, who organised and led the pressure outside parliament, forcing the government to veto Napoleon III's plan to take action against Garibaldi.

According to the already cited Howell, as early as 1861, the Italian workers made an attempt to address the English workers directly via an appeal on the part of the Neapolitan workers, dated 17 December 1861, sent to the London Trades Council, which, in its turn, the Council answered in early 1862.

It soon became possible to come into direct contact with the continental workers via the exiles. The third International Exhibition was inaugurated in London in May 1862 and was also visited by the workers' delegations of various countries. The most numerous delegation was the French. And it is on the French situation that we shall now dwell.

The situation in France. The economic development of the 1850s and the growth in the working population.

The 2 December 1851 coup* aroused the opposition of part of the bourgeoisie, but it was clear to its authors—whose social base was made up of the clergy, the peasants and most of the bourgeoisie who detested the "red spectre"—that the new regime would be able to survive only if it succeeded in gaining the support of the masses of urban workers, from whose ranks came most of the republican army. Hence, while every independent working class movement was ruthlessly repressed, attempts were simultaneously made to satisfy the masses' material needs.

The 25 March 1852 decree included all public meetings directly in a series of Penal Code articles and the 1834 Act, thus almost completely annulling freedom of assembly. The decree of the same year regarding the friendly societies and the transformation of the industrial tribunals

* Mounted by Napoleon III.

(*Conseils des Prud'hommes*), the tougher measures (thanks to the 22 June 1854 Act) regarding employment cards (which left the workers in prey to police dictates), the constant harassment of all the co-operative associations that had been formed prior to 1851, and the rigid execution of bans on forming and joining a trade union, were all intended to deal a final blow to the workers' movement.

The Empire's attempts to reconcile the workers to the new regime by improving their material situation through a kind of "imperial socialism" also went hand in hand with these police measures. The 22 January decree laid down subsidies for all the "authorised" friendly societies, using the assets confiscated from the Orléans. The *Caisse de service de la Boulangerie* was founded on 27 December 1853 to ensure that the people had cheap bread. Various charitable institutions for the workers were set up and, above all, a plan for public works—railways, telegraph systems and big buildings in Paris, Marseilles, Lyons and Bordeaux—was launched.

The ceaseless economic progress that characterised the 1850s and that was especially promoted by numerous property credit institutes, such as Crédit Mobilier, created a series of enterprises and increased the demand for labour at a dizzying rate. Thanks to technical progress, numerous new industrial branches developed or old branches found a new base: the metallurgic, chemical, textile and sugar industries. From 1846 to 1861, the [French] urban population grew by 1,712,000 units, and Paris, which had 1,021,530 inhabitants in 1851, arrived at 1,825,274 in 1866.

Paris's working population grew impetuously, particularly in the building, textile and food industries. The role played by the French capital during the Second Empire, dictating fashion throughout the world, like a kind of *modern Babylonia*, also promoted the development of luxury goods—the *Articles de Paris*—and bronze artefacts.

It seemed as if the aim of the "Caesarist" policy had been achieved. The experiences of the 1848-51 years had left the working class with a deep distrust of the bourgeoisie and intellectuals. The 1850s' conspiracies, in which the political police had been involved, always found followers in the workers' circles, but the great mass of workers remained uninvolved. What was left of the Cabet and Fourier associations still survived, but their interest was mainly drawn to the experiments in the New World, to the colonies in Texas and Nauwoo. The Saint-Simonists, instead, joined the ranks of "imperial socialism", providing ideological motivations for the new speculation in the stock exchange and the railways.

The first symptoms of the French working class's political reawakening appeared during the Crimean War. Although this war was seen favourably by the masses since its target was Russia, the political dithering and misconduct of the war caused a certain agitation in the working class. With the conquest of Sebastopol, however, calm was restored.

In France, too, the about-turn was therefore caused by the 1857-58 crisis, which suddenly deflated all the illusions of "social imperialism". Every effort to keep wages at a level that roughly corresponded to the ceaseless increases in food and rent prices proved useless. In spite of the Anti-Combinations Act, the workers had called a series of strikes, particularly in 1854 and 1855, and had succeeded in obtaining a pay rise. Subsequent to the 1857 crisis, there was another wave of strikes to defend existing wage levels. This working class agitation was so widespread that, even in those cases where the strikers were prosecuted, their sentences were light and the defendants were often pardoned.

In 1858, the government made a confidential investigation that revealed that the workers' economic conditions were barely sufficient and that, as the bourgeois economist himself* admitted, the situation in capitalist industry was the fertile soil in which the workers' discontent grew.

The newspaper "L'Espérance". Napoleon III seeks support in some working class strata against the republican bourgeoisie and the Catholic clergy.

But it was not only the change in the economic situation that forced the Empire to offload part of its responsibilities and grant the working class's economic struggle greater scope. The political conditions also suggested making some liberal concessions. Reaction, which, after Orsini's assassination attempt, had found another terrible means of repression in the "Security Act", did not last long. The Italian War of Independence, fought against the clergy's wishes, aroused great enthusiasm in the working population. The depth of this interest was demonstrated by the outburst of scorn that greeted the news of the preliminary conditions to the Peace of Villafranca. The posters with the telegraphed news were torn from the walls. In the St. Antoine district [in Paris] there were clashes with the police.

The Empire could no longer withdraw; any attempt to prevent the unification of Italy by force of arms and to save the Peace of Villafranca conditions would only have further stoked the revolutionary atmosphere in France. On the other hand, it was equally clear that the further development of the Italian question would only have exacerbated the clergy's discontent. Only the working class and the petty bourgeoisie could be a counterweight. This is why the first steps were taken towards a "Liberal Empire" and renewed rapprochement with England.

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* The author of the investigation.

The first concession was the 17 August 1859 amnesty, which allowed almost all the exiles to return to France and opened the prison gates to the revolutionary combatants. The Press could also express itself more freely. The lead weight of the 1852 decree was not abrogated, but rigid surveillance diminished. The Republican Party could start its struggle again, and political life was reborn not only in Paris, but also in the provinces.

Meanwhile, the attempt began to gain the adhesion of those members of the working class that, under certain conditions, tended to renounce republican agitation and support the Empire. The main representative of the liberal and anticlerical trends in the imperial family was Prince Napoleon, one of the Emperor's cousins. He had a friendly relationship with the exiles of various nations, with the Germans (Karl Vogt), the Poles, the Hungarians and the Italians. His right-hand man was Armand Lévy, who had already drawn attention to himself during the 1848 revolution and was the tutor of the sons of Mickiewicz, the famous Polish poet.

In Geneva, in the autumn of 1859, Lévy founded a great French-language international newspaper, "L'Espérance". This newspaper passionately defended all the oppressed nations—Italy in particular—, harshly criticised Austria and, from the very beginning, devoted many pages to the workers' question. Readers could read in it the special column *Tribune des Travailleurs*, in which Pierre Vinçard first published his monographic notes on the Paris workers. Furthermore, Lévy had succeeded in involving other printers and lithographers, Davaud, Parrot and Coutant, as collaborators. The newspaper's political programme was a synthesis of the workers' more urgent demands: the abolition of Paragraph 1781 in the Penal Code; measures to counter the rising cost of living; and the right to form and to join trade unions. A series of articles described the strike movement in Britain and underlined the importance of the trade union organisation.

"L'Espérance" also defended the new trade policy, inaugurated with the 23 January 1860 Anglo-French agreement. This greatly discontented part of the industrial bourgeoisie. Lévy countered the manufacturers' threats to shut down the factories with the thesis of their eventual expropriation in the public interest.

The 24 November 1860 decree, which increased the rights of the legislative body and allowed the diffusion of the text of debates, gave the Press further room. It was possible to defend, in Paris, the programme endorsed by "L'Espérance" and the principles of imperial democracy.

It was "L'Opinion Nationale" that took on this task. It, too, was published with the help of Prince Napoleon and edited by the former Saint-Simonist Adolphe Guéroult. One of its most influential columnists was Lévy himself, who continued his campaign in favour of imperial democracy in the new newspaper. Together with the workers with whom

he had kept in touch since former times, he published a series of pamphlets under the general title "Brochures ouvrières".

> *«In the group of workers that were involved in these Red Pamphlets»—says Professor W. Lexis—«there were certain men that had a great influence on their companions. The tinsmith Chabaud was the Union chairman, the carpenter Wanschooten chairman of his trade's Friendly Society, the Devoir League of Carpenters' Boys, Coquard chairman of the bookbinders' Friendly Society, and Derouard chairman of the Alliance de la Cordonnerie. The typesetter Coutant was elected as the printers' delegate to the Joint Committee on Wages in December 1861, as were also the typesetters Baraguet and Viguier, the first of whom polled more than 2,400 votes at the meeting of 3,000 of his co-workers and the second almost 2,000.»*

The first number of "Brochures ouvrières" attacks the Orleanists and defends the policy of the Empire "in favour" of the workers in a number of "over-emphatic" articles. The authors expected the Emperor to pursue a policy of reforms that would further consolidate the alliance between the Empire and the working class. The workers' demands are discussed in greater depth in another two numbers. Their main demand was the abolition of all the obstacles to the formation of workers' associations. But this—as we shall see—was not always the same as the demand for the elimination of the Anti-Combinations Act.

In fact, the workers that gathered round Armand Lévy merely set their sights on professional representation in which not only the entrepreneurs could take the floor. The new corporations into which the workers organised themselves were not trade unions. These *Chambres corporatives*—just like the Chambers of Commerce or the Entrepreneurs' Associations that looked after the capitalists' interests—made every effort to improve the workers' material and intellectual conditions, but were above all reformed guilds, suitable for organisation according to single trades, which presupposed collaboration with the entrepreneurs and excluded the use of strikes. The 1843 conditions, which had also resisted the acid test of the 1848 revolution, were their example, and it is no coincidence that the pro-Empire positions were widely represented by the printers.

Events soon showed, however, that it was very hard to realise the complete harmony of interests between capital and labour even for this trade that was proposed as a model*. On 17 May 1861, the printers sent the entrepreneurs a petition with 2,682 signatures in which they argued the need to bring their wages into line with food and rent price rises and asked for the convocation of a Joint Committee on Wages. Several months went by before the Entrepreneurs' Association agreed to this on 5 December. The workers elected their delegates during a meeting authorised by the prefect of police. 2,953 workers participated in the vote and Baraguet, the delegate who was most voted for, polled 2,404 votes.

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* Because of its corporative traditions.

The first session of the Joint Committee on Wages was held on 9 January 1862. To break down the workers' resistance, right after this meeting an entrepreneur started to hire a certain number of women workers at lower wages. Other printing works owners followed suit. A strike broke out. The cadres leading the struggle (Gauthier, Moulinier and Parrot) were jailed, prosecuted and sentenced.

It is true that they were then pardoned, but also among the printers, voices were raised asking that the abrogation of every ban on the right to form and to join trade unions be placed on the agenda. The whole story weakened Armand Lévy's influence. He defended the printers' demands in "L'Opinion Nationale", but could do little to help the struggle, despite his relationship with Prince Napoleon.

Lévy was luckier with another initiative. In fact, the proposal to send a workers' delegation to the London International Exhibition came from his group. The consequences of this action were completely different from what Lévy expected, but he acted as the main go-between between the workers and Prince Napoleon, the chairman of the French Exhibition committee.

The International Exhibitions and the participation of workers' delegations. The policy of "imperial socialism" in France.

On the occasion of the first Great, or International, Exhibition in London (1851), a number of French workers chosen by the entrepreneurs had already been asked to visit it at the state's expense. Nevertheless, on the advice of Adolphe Blanqui* and Emile de Girardin, an independent delegation was also formed. There were 15 delegates in all, including Pierre Vinçard as the engravers' representative. In the report made by this delegation, there is no trace of any attempt to establish permanent contact with the English workers; emphasis is laid, instead, on the need for a peaceful relationship between France and England. We read in it:

«Workers, if they speak to you of the English people with hatred and anger, if they tell you it has always been France's enemy, don't believe them. Try to overcome this prejudice. It needs to disappear like all the lies that, as such, oppose the cause of our emancipation.
The English workers' conditions are no better than ours—some even think they're worse. Like us, they're ceaselessly submitted to a life of labour. Happiness, as in France, isn't yet a reality; it's only a hope. Why then should you be enemies and not brothers? Hasn't England offered the victims of our civil discords great, generous hospitality?
If governments are so crazy as to hate each other, the peoples should give an example of wisdom and repeat: peace, universal peace!»

* An economist and brother of the revolutionary Louis Auguste.

This had happened even before the coup. In 1855, the second International Exhibition was held, this time in Paris. Workers' delegations, whether from the capital or the provinces, were totally excluded. It was feared that the Exhibition might give the workers a possibility to get organised.

However, as we have seen, the situation changed in 1862. When the group around Lévy took the initiative to promote a workers' delegation*, this proposal was immediately backed by a number of industrialists and part of the Press.

Initially, the group turned to the Emperor, counting on his liking for Italy, to ask for a grant to send this delegation to the Italian Exhibition in Florence. Their request, presented to the Emperor in September 1861, was turned down on 22 November by Rouher, the Minister of Trade and Agriculture. He said:

«I must point out that that the Florence Exhibition is purely national and partial; the government has no funds at its disposal for such a kind of journey or mission.»

This reply was a clear invitation to turn to the committee set up for the London International Exhibition, of which Prince Napoleon was the chairman. The workers willingly accepted it.

Meanwhile, the newspapers debated the question. The impulse behind it was provided by a Lyons manufacturer, Arlès Dufour, who was also a former Saint-Simonist and on good terms with Prince Napoleon. First in an interview with a contributor to the "Le Progrès de Lyon", and then in a letter addressed to its editorial staff, Dufour highlighted the usefulness of such a delegation and recommended that the workers should also launch a fund-raising campaign to cover the costs of this initiative. This proposal was backed by the newspapers "Le Temps" and in particular by "L'Opinion Nationale", which added in a footnote to Arlès Dufour's letter the advice that the workers *«should help themselves»*.

This article offered the first opportunity for the representative of another group of Parisian workers, which had said nothing until then, to sally forth. This representative was Henri-Louis Tolain, a highly specialised engraver.

The intervention of the followers of Proudhon's theories in the debate that precedes the formation of the French workers' delegation to be sent to the London International Exhibition.

Tolain, a convinced Proudhonist, was sceptical of imperial democracy. Together with his colleagues, he adopted an intermediate stance. Howev-

* To the third International Exhibition.

er, this was more distant from that of the few workers who, together with a number of revolutionary students, constituted the few cadres of the new group organised by Auguste Blanqui after the amnesty, than from that of the pro-Empire workers.

He was an openly declared adversary of communism and of any action taken against the existing political regime. Although he said he was a republican, he believed in the possibility of winning over the democratic institutions in a peaceful way, via the systematic use of every legal possibility and the unflagging education of the workers. As the indispensable condition for this political agitation, he placed in the forefront the demand for freedom of association and assembly and the creation of educational institutes for the workers.

It was these demands that drew Tolain and his colleagues nearer to the pro-Empire workers who sincerely believed that, since the Empire had helped the anticlerical currents after the Italian War and inaugurated a free trade policy, it would guarantee other political concessions.

Tolain sent an open letter to the editorial staff of "L'Opinion Nationale" in which he explained his group's point of view. He too believed that the workers should help themselves. Why then—he wondered—don't they? When the initiative comes from above, from government authorities or entrepreneurs, it arouses distrust in the workers, since they feel dominated and limited in their freedom. But any initiative from below is destined to meet with insurmountable obstacles, also because any attempt on the part of the workers to organise themselves, to set up a committee, or to organise a meeting can even become dangerous for them.

Hence, there remains only one way, i.e. to tell the workers:

> *«You are free, organise yourselves, act in your own interests, we won't place obstacles in your way. Our help, if you need it, if you believe it is necessary, will be completely disinterested, and as long as you remain within these limits we won't intervene».*

The letter attracted general interest. It is highly likely that the rapprochement between the Tolain group and the pro-monarchical workers took place after it. One thing is certain: Tolain had no previous relationship with the *Espérance* group, of which only his future friend, Perrachon, was a member. It may have been Armand Lévy, who, as the editor of "L'Opinion Nationale", could know the author of the letter, that acted as go-between.

Be that as it may, Tolain was consulted only after his letter. Only since then do we find his name among the signatures at the foot of the workers' petition to Prince Napoleon. When the petitioners received an affirmative answer, with the recommendation to send a deputation to Prince Napoleon, Chabaud, Coutant and Tolain himself were chosen. After this meeting, the workers presented a draft that was to regulate the composition of the delegation to send to London, and were obliged to concede Tolain and his colleagues a number of changes.

The main difference with respect to the previous plan was the following: the Workers' Committee, which was to run the elections for the formation of the delegation, would be elected by the chairmen of the various trades' friendly societies instead of, as previously agreed upon, by the members of the industrial tribunals, who were chosen by lot. Notwithstanding the opposition of the prefect of police, Boitelle, who stated that he preferred the abrogation of the Anti-Combinations Act to allowing these elections, the workers obtained permission at the end of January 1862, and as early as 2 February the Committee was set up with Chabaud as chairman, Wanschooten as vice-chairman, Coutant as secretary and Coquard as treasurer. On 21 February, it published an appeal to all the Paris workers.

Each worker that was able to prove his status could take part in the elections. All in all, 50 polling stations were set up for 50 professions with about 150 kinds of different specialisations. Almost 2,000 workers voted and elected 200 delegates. To meet the expenses, the Exhibition Imperial Committee and the city each contributed 20,000 francs. Furthermore, a fund-raising campaign was launched in the factories that—according to Tolain—brought in 13,000 francs. The industrial corporation, in which Tolain was very influential, showed particular energy in this fund-raising. On average, each delegate received 200 francs, plus a small contribution for his family.

Even before the end of the elections, the Committee published a pamphlet in which it explained the story and aims of this delegation. The preface, signed by I. B. Vasseur, emphasised the delegation's purely technical and professional task. We read in it as follows:

> *«The new trade treaty lays great obligations on the workers, the industrialists and the state. The most serious objection to free trade is that the potential markets that the British struggle to find all over the world will now be sought in France; to fight competition their industrialists would be forced to produce as cheaply as possible and, subsequent to their gradual, compulsory pay cuts, English workers would pour into France. It is important to show that such fears are groundless.»*

Hence, the delegation was assigned the task of dispelling the doubts of part of the industrial bourgeoisie that, already greatly irritated at the trade treaty with Britain, was very sceptical about the future of French industry and its capacity to compete with British industry.

The introduction ended with the hope that the greatest harmony might reign between France and England:

> *«The day will come when there will no longer be class reality in the nation, but perfect harmony in the factories; in which, with the development of fraternity among the peoples, it will be possible to say "The Channel is no longer there" with an even greater ring of truth than when we used to say "The Pyrenees are no longer there", or than when we now say "The Alps are no longer there".»*

Coutant wrote a number of reflections on the importance of the delegations. The workers had to carry out their task scrupulously in order to demonstrate the progress made in their education and capacities in a positive way. The delegations therefore represented the starting point for further development, the first step that would be followed by others. Chabaud presented the advantages the International Exhibitions could offer the workers, recommending that they should choose only the most capable as delegates. Coquard drew up a report on the 1851 delegations, attributing the cause of their failure to the fact that, contrary to what had been the case with the later delegations, they had not been the result of general elections.

In his concluding article, Tolain described the necessary evolution of the world of industry towards free trade. In his opinion, the division of labour, the source of progress within each nation, was also the source of progress within the comity of nations. In this sense, the French trade agreement with Britain, as well as with Belgium, was a blessing for the three peoples. He highlighted professional instruction, which he saw as the guarantee of the peaceful solution to the problem of pauperism.

The tasks of the workers' delegation were thus set out by the leaders of the great majority of Paris workers, and these were their opinions on the eve of the trip. The first group left on 19 July and the last on 15 October 1862.

Similar delegations to London set out not only from the Seine and Paris department, but also from other departments. After the Paris delegation, the most numerous were those of Amiens (40 delegates) and Lyons (60 delegates). The latter was made up of the most advanced Lyons workers: Émile Richard, Monet, Milcent, Domenget and Faure.

According to an official calculation, in the course of 1862 about 750 French workers, chosen by their colleagues or recommended by the entrepreneurs themselves, visited the London International Exhibition.

The 1862 International Exhibition; the August meeting in Freemasons' Hall and its real importance as the birthplace of the First International.

The arrival of a numerous workers' delegation was an event that could not go unnoticed either in the English workers' circles or among the French émigrés in London. It is understandable that the official nature of the delegation and the way in which it had been formed should inspire a lack of confidence among the revolutionary and republican émigrés. This circumstance may explain why the idea of organising an official welcome had been put forward only by the editorial staff of an organ of the co-operative movement, to which some of the French émigrés contributed.

The periodical was "The Working Man: A Political and Social Advocate of the Rights of Labour and a Monthly Record of Co-operative Progress".

In July, on the initiative of "The Working Man" editorial staff, a committee was set up to prepare an official welcome for the French workers. The meeting, organised under the aegis of well-known politicians and industrialists, was announced on the front page of "The Working Man" for 5 August in the Freemasons' Hall, Great Queen Street, Lincoln's Inn Fields. Its chairman was to be the MP H.B. Sheridan. J. Morton Peto, W.S. Clay, R. Clifton and Joseph Paxton were mentioned as participants.

The participation of Peto, one of the entrepreneurs' main leaders in the clash with the agricultural labourers, can be explained by the fact that the London Trades Council, headed by the agricultural labourers' representative, kept away from this initiative. There are two reports of this meeting that is often considered as the founding moment of the IWA, one English, more detailed, and one French, more concise.

The meeting took place as planned, although it was not chaired by Sheridan, but by I. A. Nicholay, "the people's old friend", as the English report defines him. In his opening speech, he invited all the speakers *«to moderation, in view of the wishes of the Committee, which desires to avoid any political allusion during this "feast" of fraternity that might lead to polemical clashes»*.

The secretary E. Harris then read a number of letters in which various political exponents stated their approval of the meeting's aims. There was also a letter from the British Prime Minister Lord Palmerston:

> *«I am sending you the contribution promised for the meeting. I am pleased that you are organising the welcome for the French workers who have come to visit our Exhibition and hope that you will explain to them that there should be a competitive spirit between the French and English factories, and never a spirit of envy.»*

This letter set out the basic theme of the whole meeting.

In the English workers' address, which was read out first of all, there was no trace of the hostility that, until a short time before, had characterised the relations between such English entrepreneurs as Peto and the workers. In fact, in the name of the English workers, the speaker expressed his deep conviction that *«a good rapport with the employers is the only way to solve the present problems»*, and clearly recognised that the development of machines and the growing use of steam and electricity continually changed social conditions, bringing about a reduction in the demand for workers. This posed important questions:

> *«What is to be done about the jobless? Are they to remain unproductive and, as potential competitors, be condemned to starve to death? Are they to be funded by those who work? We don't expect to solve these problems by ourselves but say that they must be resolved with the contribution of everyone: theoreticians and economists, statesmen, historians, employers and workers of all countries.»*

The address ended with the hope of realising *«means of communication at an international level»*.

The French workers' response was enthusiastic. It augured the overcoming of the national differences between France and England:

> *«Even though with different languages, do we not express the same ideas? Enough, therefore, of this insane hatred between nations. The working classes of all nations must advance hand in hand towards the conquest of freedom.»*

In spite of all the organisers' efforts to keep the nature of the meeting strictly apolitical, some of the participants' speeches resounded with a different note, but on the whole the event went off as programmed, as is clear from both reports. Even in the speech made by the one-time Chartist Charles Murray, no mention was made of the working class struggle with the entrepreneurs. No speaker drew attention to the need for a permanent international connection between the workers of the different countries in their struggle for emancipation. The interests of industry, as is also clear in the English address, were considered a top priority, and a great deal of emphasis was laid on the need for an agreement between the workers and the entrepreneurs as the only way to improve the workers' straitened circumstances. In the speech made by Melville Glover, who acted as translator and expressed the hope of founding a workers' committee, mention was also made of exchanging news and information about industry at an international level.

We have underlined from the very beginning that the French workers' welcome had not only been prepared by the English workers. The undisputed proof of this is Palmerston's letter, and nothing could characterise this meeting better than the English address and Melville Glover's speech, in which certain scholars even go so far as to see as the whole of the IWA in embryo.

On the other hand, we have also observed that the real leaders of the English workers had nothing to do with the meeting. None of them appeared as a speaker and no reference was made to the Trades Council. It is therefore impossible to consider either this meeting or even the English address that was seen as its birth certificate as the origins of the IWA. This legend finds an explanation in the particular conditions in which the IWA developed subsequently in France.

Nevertheless, it is true that this visit, with its indirect consequences, was highly significant as a stage on the way to mutual understanding between the French and English workers. We shall also see that personal contact with their English comrades and first-hand knowledge of their conditions very soon bore fruit.

There is no doubt that some of the French delegates, including Tolain, came into touch with the English trade union leaders, probably through the mediation of some of the émigrés. This is also confirmed by Tolain

himself. He adds, however, that in the beginning these contacts were few and far between. Things subsequently got better, but even in this case the impulse was given by completely new events that had nothing to do with the London International Exhibition.

A number of French workers who, during their visit to London, had found a job and had settled there permanently—for example, Eugène Dupont, the future IWA Secretary for France—, were able to act as go-betweens.

It is also possible that the French workers established personal relations not only with the English workers, but also with the workers of other nations, during their stay in London. Thus—writes Héligon—the delegates met Belgians, Germans, Italians and Spaniards and discussed the workers' situation in the various countries. We do not know whether the French delegates met any of the German émigrés.

The return to France. The "Red Pamphlets".

One of the most important consequences of this visit was the scission, within the committee itself, between the workers who continued to remain in the circles of "imperial socialism" and those who, under the leadership of Tolain and his group, wanted to be free from every official tutelage. The break occurred right after their return from London. The committee, which had organised the election of the delegations, split up and Vasseur, Coutant and Tolain withdrew. According to a statement made by the latter in 1865 and to which we will return, Tolain resigned while he was still in London. As regards the reasons for this scission, Tolain set them out in greater detail before a commission of inquiry in 1871.

The depth of the impression made on the delegates by their trip to England can be seen in the reports published on their return.

> *«These reports»*—writes Professor Lexis, who had gathered them together—*«are, on the one hand, a sort of continuation of the "Red Pamphlets" and, on the other, inaugurate, in relatively measured tones, the series of workers' communiqués that, from now on, have accompanied the International Exhibitions in an increasingly clearly defined way. Just a handful of the 53 reports limit themselves to purely technical aspects; most of them also describe, often in an interesting way, the particular conditions of their factories, making comparisons with English conditions, and put forward proposals for the improvement of the workers' situation. The right to associate, to meet, and to form and to join trade unions are the main, constantly repeated demands. In particular, however, following the example of the English trade unions, the unions demand the institution of trade union organisations charged with fixing wages by negotiating with the entrepreneurs' associations, or mixed organisations, in which both categories are represented on equal terms.»*

In general, this account is exact. We need, however, to consider that all these reports were collected and published by the Workers' Committee after Tolain and its more radical representatives had left it. True, most of the reports, with very few exceptions, are characterised by a wholly independent position vis-à-vis the government and Prince Napoleon, but the influence of the "Espérance" group was still very strong. The reports are almost unanimous in their demand for the abolition of the Anti-Combinations Act, but the trade unions they advocate are more similar to the guilds defended by Lévy than to English trade unions.

This is also true of the more radical reports. They certainly highlight the freedom of association that they observed in England, but of all the English workers' organisations the friendly and co-operative societies seem to have aroused the most interest. In any case, the English example undoubtedly spurred on the movement for the abolition of the Anti-Combinations Act and strongly influenced the formation of trade unions in France in the years following the visit to London. This translated into the preparation and promotion of the movement for the reduction in working hours, with the demand for the 10-hour working day.

The whole initiative led to unexpected political consequences. In fact, the government hoped that the thousands of workers that had taken part in the elections for the delegates would also vote for the government candidates in the imminent May 1863 election, but it was grossly mistaken.

The Republican opposition won a landslide victory, winning in all the big cities: Paris, Lyon, Marseille, etc. The vast majority of the workers voted, in fact, for the radical bourgeoisie.

The crisis in the textile sector strengthens the ties between the French and English workers. The echo of the question of slavery in America and of the struggle for freedom in Poland. The summer 1863 meeting in St. James's Hall.

The ties between the French and English workers, re-established with the delegation's visit, would perhaps have been interrupted again, as in the past, had not two events—the cotton crisis and the Polish uprising—not led to similar movements on both sides of the Channel.

The cotton crisis, stemming from the American Civil War, worsened in the second half of 1862. Imports of raw cotton to England fell from 1,140.6 million pounds in 1860 to 309.3 in 1862. France was in the same situation. This crisis weighed heavily on the workers' conditions. According to reliable estimates, 60.3% of the spinners and 58% of the weavers lost their jobs in October 1862. The situation in Lancashire was terrible, and things were no better for the French workers.

In November 1862, a *Working Men's Central Committee for the Relief of Distress in Lancashire* was set up mainly under the direction of Odger and Cremer. On 20 January 1863, an appeal by Tolain, Coutant, Perrachon, Blanc, Kin, etc. inviting the Paris workers to raise funds for the French textile workers was published in "L'Opinion Nationale". This was followed on 26 January by another appeal signed by Chabaud, Wanschooten and other members of the Workers' Committee who still followed the Palais Royal directives. This confirms that the rift we have just mentioned happened right after the delegates' return from London.

In spite of the hardship caused by the American Civil War, the English workers campaigned vigorously against the government which—as is well known—was inclined, like the bourgeoisie and the aristocracy, to take the side of the slave-owners. At the end of 1862, big demonstrations were held in Manchester and London and messages expressing their support were sent to Lincoln. It was the former Chartist leader Ernest Jones that led this agitation in the North of England, while in London it was the same workers that had been the protagonists of the agitation for the nine-hour working day.

When, on New Year's Eve 1863, Lincoln announced the emancipation of all the slaves in the Confederate States—an initiative that the British government defined as illegal—the English workers again organised a campaign of demonstrations, among them the 4 February meeting in Exeter Hall and the 26 March meeting in St. James's Hall. As reported by "The Bee-Hive", Howell, Cremer and Connolly, among others, took the floor in the latter initiative, and Odger, Charles Murray, Robert Shaw and Applegarth sat on the committee.

The English workers' movement in favour of the Northern States was undoubtedly strong. We cannot, however, ignore the fact that there was also a minority among the workers, especially in London, that, although not in favour of slavery, believed, together with part of the bourgeoisie, that the Southern States had the right to become independent. This partiality for the Confederates was really only a different expression of the aversion to centralistic trends, and it was no coincidence that it was more represented among the workers opposed to centralisation in big trade unions, i.e. among those that identified with Potter's group.

In just as energetic but more compact way, in early 1863 the English workers took a firm stand in favour of the Poles. They made every effort to put pressure on the government in their favour. Their first meeting was held in St. James's Hall on 28 April 1863 and was chaired by Professor Beesly, who had already supported the Polish cause vigorously in "The Bee-Hive". Beesly strongly criticised the British government's position in his speech. A deputation appointed by the assembly was re-

ceived by Palmerston, but his reply was evasive. Armed intervention* was impossible without France. To increase the pressure on the government, it was decided to hold another demonstration, this time with the participation of representatives of the French workers.

In fact, enthusiasm for the Polish uprising was just as great in Paris. The fate of the Poles aroused strong emotion in the Paris workshops. The workers launched a fund-raising campaign. The agitation was promoted by Tolain and his colleagues. A petition was made, but the Emperor rejected it. Tolain and his collaborators accepted the English workers' invitation all the more promptly. In Paris, too, it was believed that a joint demonstration in favour of Poland would bring greater pressure to bear on both governments.

The meeting was held on 22 July 1863 in St. James's Hall and was chaired by John Villiers Shelley, a member of parliament. Among others, Stainsby, Dell, Facey, Odger and Cremer took the floor. The latter harshly criticised all of Palmerston's foreign policy. He recalled how Palmerston had treated Hungary and expressed the conviction that he would also sacrifice Poland, if the British people allowed him to do so. Odger spoke in an equally passionate way and urged war against Russia.

Tolain spoke on behalf of the French delegation, led by Count Zamoyski. After the English report, he said that

> *«he and his colleagues had been deputed by the workmen of Paris to convey their sentiments of profound esteem and affection to their brethren in England, and to urge on them a unity of action in the cause of unhappy Poland. He then drew a vivid picture of the horrors of the struggle in which Poland was at present engaged—still striving, wounded and bleeding. But ever indomitable. It was necessary for the sake of civilisation that the encroachments of Russia should be stayed. All Europe with one accord should assist, and in the name of humanity throughout the earth unitedly raise their voices to the skies with the cry of "Vive la Pologne".» ("The Bee-Hive", 25 July, 1863).*

In his conclusion, Tolain recalled the generosity and hospitality with which the French delegation, of which he too had had the honour to be a member, had been greeted in London on the occasion of the International Exhibition. Michael Barry, Stainsby and Connolly took the floor after him.

There is no need to set out here the reasons why the immediate aim of this demonstration was not achieved. True, the agitation forced the French and British governments to make their intervention in favour of Poland more pressing, but only at a purely formal level. And this hesitant position towards Russia gave rise to the even more energetic repression of the uprising.

* In favour of the Poles.

New relations between the French and English workers. The meeting with the London Trades Council and the Bell Inn meeting. The December 1863 Address to the Workmen of France from the Workingmen of England.

However, the 22 July 1863 meeting had other consequences that had not been posed as its direct aim. In the course of one year, French and English workers had found themselves together for the second time. It was obvious that it was time to think of making these relations more stable. How did this occur?

The great amount of available evidence, all of people directly involved, is contradictory. Thus Fribourg says that, right after this meeting, during their talks with the English, Tolain and his colleagues augured stable relations between the French and English workers. Negotiations with the participation of Potter, Collet, Odger, Dupont and others apparently sprang from this. However, he does not give any precise facts.

Within the context of a short history of the IWA, the anonymous article in "The Times"* describes subsequent events in the following way:

> *«After the meeting, the Frenchmen were invited into a neighbouring public house, where things were talked over, and an agreement come to to have a special meeting on the following evening at the Bell Inn, Old Bailey, to discuss the practicability of an international working men's alliance. George Odger was requested to think the matter over, and consider on what basis such an alliance could be founded, but the thing came on so unexpectedly, the time was so short, and the matter of so great an importance, that little more could be done except to make an agreement that an international alliance should be formed.*
> *Mr. Odger dwelt on the necessity of putting a stop to diplomatic intrigues, establishing universal peace, and protecting labour against the encroachments of capital. The Frenchmen had no objection, but preferred confining their efforts for the moment to the liberation of Poland. A committee consisting of W. Cremer, joiner; J. Eglington, carpenter; T. Grant Facey, painter; C. Goddard, bookbinder; and G.Odger, shoemaker, was appointed to consider the matter and report to a future meeting. The committee instructed Odger to draw up an address to the workmen of France.»*

Howell—whose reconstruction of the facts is anything but precise—places the origins of the IWA in the 22 July meeting and the subsequent discussion between the French and English workers:

> *«The immediate circumstance that led to the formation of the International was a meeting in favour of Polish independence held in London's St. Martin's Hall in 1863* [he mixes up either the place or the date], *in which a delegation from Paris took part. After the meeting, some of its promoters met in an inn in Long Acre with the aim of promoting "great fraternity among the peoples".* [...] *An address written right afterwards, and signed by five London workers* [...] *was sent to Paris.* [...] *This was how the International was born.»*

* Dated 27 October 1871, it was written by Eccarius.

Professor Beesly also speaks about the St. James's Hall meeting as the origins of the IWA, but mixes up the first meeting, held under his chairmanship, with the 22 July meeting. He also states that Fribourg—who had no connection with Tolain and his group at the time—was a member of the French delegation. He states only that *«before returning home* [the French] *met some of the London workers' leaders and it was decided to organise an international organisation. An address to the French workers was drawn up by Odger, translated and sent to Paris»*. He certainly knew about that, as he himself had translated the address into French.

Friedrich Lessner—whose memoirs were written more than thirty years after the events—also mentions the Poland meeting, but postpones its date to April 1864:

> *«The defeat of Poland had met with ardent participation everywhere. In April 1864, a meeting of English workers was held in St. James's Hall to win public opinion to the Polish cause and to bring pressure to bear in its favour on Lord Palmerston, the then British prime minister. The French workers also sent a delegation to the meeting. After the meeting, a committee of English workers was formed and sent a "fraternal address" to their French comrades.»*

Only one conclusion can be drawn from all these reconstructions: after the 22 July 1863 meeting in St. James's Hall, there were contacts between the French and English workers, and the need for a closer and more durable tie between the workers of the two countries was stressed and discussed. What remains unclear, however, is the nature of these meetings and their relationship with the official demands of the London trade unions. We shall soon see that even the major participants in these events forgot very important facts.

As a matter of fact, there was a second meeting right after the 22 July meeting. This was not, however, a private meeting but, as is clear from the report of "The Beehive", a solemn official reception, organised this time by the London Trades Council as the fully legitimate representative of the London workers. This meeting, set for Sunday 23 July, was held at the Bell Inn, Old Bailey, as Eccarius relates in his article in "The Times".

According to "The Beehive" report (25 July 1863), only five Paris delegates were present: Perrachon (a bronze worker), Aubert (a machine operator), Bibal (a shirtmaker), Cohadon (a mason) and Tolain, described as a silk weaver. Facey chaired the meeting; its translator was Jourdain, who stressed in his welcoming speech that the workers' emancipation was the common aspiration of the French and English workers.
Odger replied.

> *«He stated that he was convinced that the English workers had espoused the Polish cause and that they did not intend to allow Lord Palmerston to obstruct it yet again, as he had already done on other occasions. As Secretary of the Trades Council, he and Goddard, Coulson, Applegarth, Butler, Potter and others greeted the French delegation and hoped that the*

> *day was dawning when the working men of all countries would become acquainted and then, instead of wars and slavery, would exist freedom and prosperity.»*

Besides Odger, Potter, Cremer, Goddard and Wallarge—probably the same as had spoken at the 5 August meeting the previous year—also made opening speeches. Also present were a Polish delegation and a German worker, Weber, who explained the positive effects of co-operation among the workers of the various countries. At the end of the meeting, the resolution to elect a committee that would draw up an address and send it to the French workers via "The Bee-Hive" was adopted unanimously.

The committee was made up of five members. Over three months were to go by, however, before it completed its task and the draft address could be presented at another meeting. This was again held at the Bell Inn, Old Bailey, on 10 November 1863. Odger, Cremer, Eglinton, Nieass, Graham, Ackrill and Applegarth took the floor. The draft was approved unanimously. According to some sources, this draft had been written by Odger. It was published for the first time in "The Bee-Hive" of 5 December 1863 under the headline "Address of English to French Workmen". The text is as follows:

> *«Brethren of France:*
> *Your welcome visit to us, on the occasion of our great meeting convened to express our indignation at the wrong doers who have for so many years inflicted the most atrocious insults and cruelties on that noble but unhappy people, the Poles, has inspired us with the hope of seeing a brighter and happier future for the neglected and despised peoples of Europe.*
> *The visit could not have had a better origin or a nobler purpose than the cause of Poland; a cause made sacred by the devotion, truthfulness, and self-sacrificing heroism of a people, whose righteous struggles for freedom have won for them the sympathy and admiration of all the wise and good, whether in high or low station in Christendom.*
> *We were proud to welcome the representatives of the liberty-loving French people, who came forward to initiate what has been too long delayed, a grand fraternity of peoples. None could have commenced the work with a better prospect of success than the enthusiastic and generous-hearted Frenchmen. Your skill in manufactures, your proficiency in art, science, and literature, your love for all that is beautiful in nature and pleasing in design, have long secured for you a high a high place in the estimation of the world. Your right to that position could not be better sustained than by the step you have now taken towards bringing together in common council those whose labours produce all that is essential to human existence, in order that their united efforts on behalf of liberty may counteract the evil influences of those who have brought degradation upon nations by making promises and professions which they never intend to see carried into effect, and by agreeing to treaties that weak countries must strictly obey, but strong ones may violate as they please.*
> *Kings and emperors have their meetings and feasts, and their pomps and ceremonies are blazoned before the world; pleasing the frivolous, and gratifying the fortunate; at the same time, creating heavier burthens for the honest and industrious poor to sweat under. At these meetings successful crimes are justified, and unscrupulous ministers legalise them and exalt the criminals; whilst men with the highest talents and most God-like virtues, whose manly bearing quails not before affluent ignorance, nor panders to the vices of voluptuous courts;*

men who advocate the freedom of nations and the rights of the masses, are, if they escape death, chained in endless bondage, or, with their families, ruthlessly driven forth to seek shelter and rest from the stranger which are denied them in their native homes. This is a state of things as unworthy as the deeds of our forefathers as it is disgraceful to the age in which we live. We therefore caution those who suffer such evils to continue, without using every honourable means in their power to remove them, that they share in the responsibility of neglected duties, and must, sooner or later, make atonement for such debasing apathy.

As a means then to check the existing abuse of power, we echo your call for a fraternity of peoples. Let there be a gathering together of representatives from France, Italy, Germany, Poland, England, and all countries, where there exists a will to co-operate for the good of mankind. Let us have our congresses; let us discuss the great questions on which the peace of nations depends; let us bring our reason and moral right to bear with becoming dignity against the cajolery and brute force of the so-called rulers; and our conviction is that the power of despots will be weakened, and wily tricksters, instead of disgracing the highest offices committed to man by using their sacred trust to baffle the noblest efforts of human genius, will find their level in obscurity. This would clear the way for honourable men with comprehensive minds to come forth and legislate for the rights of the many, and not the privileges of the few.

A fraternity of peoples is highly necessary for the cause of labour, for we find that whenever we attempt to better our social condition by reducing the hours of toil, or by raising the price of labour, our employers threaten us with bringing over Frenchmen, Germans, Belgians, and others to do our work at a reduced rate of wages; and we are sorry to say that this has been done, though not from any desire on the part of our continental brethren to injure us, but through a want of regular and systematic communication between the industrious classes of all countries, which we hope to see speedily effected, as our principle is to bring up the wages of the ill-paid to as near a level as possible with that of those who are better remunerated, and not to allow our employers to play us off one against the other, and so drag us down to the lowest possible condition, suitable to their avaricious bargaining.

To do these things is the work of the peoples. The few liberties held by the masses were won by themselves, and recent experience has shown that the more we trust to princes and potentates the surer we are of being betrayed and sneered at. In proof of this let the achievements of the Italian liberators, when led by one of their own class, be compared with the dastardly conduct of those who betrayed and shot down the greatest of all modern chiefs, Garibaldi, after they had received from his hands the fruits of his perilous enterprise, leaving him a bleeding witness of a government's ingratitude. Pass from that to the breaking up by a foreign despot of the Roman republic, the freest and purest government ever seen in Europe; then remember the ungrateful attempt on the free government of Switzerland, followed by the mischievous meddling in Mexico for the base purpose of setting up an imperial for a republican form of government there, which is obnoxious to the true though suppressed spirit of the Mexicans, and entirely opposed to the traditions and sympathies of the whole of the people of that vast continent. To these crimes add the disgraceful manner in which our rulers have provoked a cruel war in China, at first with the imperialists, now with the insurgents, and we think our case is clear, as we are sure that these wrongs will produce future convulsions unless protested against by the united voice of the peoples.

We again say "fraternise". Let us have a perfect understanding with all men whose prospects are in peace, in industrial development, in freedom, and human happiness all over the world.

Do this, that the strong and brave, instead of being led forth with fire and sword to kill and destroy, to satisfy the craving desire of traders for gold, ministers for place, and despots for

conquest, may live to make their homes happy, and use their strength to assist the weak, the aged, and the destitute, with the consolation of being free from the miseries produced by war.

We say with you, let our first united effort to be for the freedom of Poland; the justness of her cause demands it, treaty obligations make it imperative, and duty points the way. Petitions must be prepared immediately by the people of both countries, setting forth the indisputable claims of the Poles to belligerent rights and presented simultaneously to our respective governments, supported by an earnest determination to act again and again in behalf of that deserving people. We must do this to prevent the intrigues of secret diplomacy (that scourge of nations), by which the devil's tragedy would be played over again—Poland's noblest sons be murdered, her daughters become the prey of a brutal soldiery, making that fair land once more a huge slaughterhouse to the everlasting shame and disgrace of the civilised world.*

Signed on behalf of the workingmen of England:
Thos. Grant Facey (Painter), President,
William Cremer (Joiner),
C. Goddard (Bookbinder),
John Eglinton (Carpenter),
George Odger (Shoemaker), etc.»

It is enough to draw attention to the underlined passages in this address to recognise in this 23 July meeting the real origins of the events and motives that led to the foundation of the IWA. While the London International Exhibition and the 5 August 1862 meeting cannot even be considered the chance occasions of the founding of the IWA, the 1863 meetings have a much different role. The old thesis, which links the foundation of the IWA to the 1863 Polish uprising, is confirmed by the facts.

Nevertheless, while this uprising offers the occasion for the French and English workers to proclaim a fraternity of peoples as the first principle of their politics, the address indicates another factor that makes this fraternity an absolute necessity for the workers. This is the need to improve their social situation via pay rises and a reduction in working hours, unrealisable aims unless the workers have an international link.

The basic difference between this English trade unionists' address and the address read by the English at the 5 August 1862 meeting is glaringly obvious. The difference in their political lines is radical. In fact, we will find that the IWA Inaugural Address draws direct inspiration from the Address to the Workmen of France from the Workingmen of England in the passage where it emphasises the necessity of putting a stop to *«the intrigues of secret diplomacy»*.

If no less than three and a half months went by before the English workers completed their address, more than eight went by before the French workers sent their reply to London. The reasons for this delay are clear if we remember what happened in France from July 1863 to August 1864.

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* i.e. recognising Poland's national sovereignty.

But before following the fate of the English address in France, it would be a good idea to recall some of the significant episodes in the English workers' movement after the writing of the address. Although these are little-known aspects, they clarify the context in which the IWA antecedents developed on English soil and help us to understand the subsequent internal struggles.

The trade union movement in England: economic struggles, local and national organisations, and agitation for the extension of universal suffrage. The struggle for the right to form and to join trade unions.

Let's begin with an episode that reveals that the trade union circles believed the address was a London Trades Council declaration. This episode regards the opposition that the address met with in the Bookbinders' Union.

The campaign against the Trades Council began right after the publication of the address to the French workers. During the 19 January 1864 Trades Council session, Potter harshly criticised Ogden, arguing that his habit of signing the various papers as Secretary would lead to the withdrawal of every trade union from the Council.

Right afterwards, on 1 February 1864, during the bookbinders' assembly, James Cameron proposed withdrawing their representative from the Trades Council. This was the same Charles Goddard who had signed the address with Ogden: in Cameron's opinion a "political document".

The motion was approved by the majority. As well as the report of the meeting in the Union's official organ, we find the reproduction of the address, accompanied by the critical comments of its editor, Dunning:

> *«When* [the address] *suggests that it represents the opinions of the "working men of England" it reaches the height of the ridiculous, since this assumption has no foundation or authority[...]». Regarding its content, Dunning states: «As a red-republican document it is a clear example of its kind. As a speech that aims to promote a union between the working men of England and those of France to some concrete end—and this was its intention—it is the most inane effusion[...]».*

Dunning's conclusion, in which he defends Napoleon III from the various attacks, is characteristic:

> *«If it is true, as we have been informed, that the French Emperor is less opposed to working men's associations than the French law itself, it is certainly a very questionable move—if one wishes to continue to benefit from this situation and tranquillise anyone—to jeopardise the French workmen's condition with a polemical republican outburst, thus destroying whatever benevolence the Emperor may feel for them. The speech may seem to lack the power to have such an effect, but the folly of the experiment is not lessened by its ineffectiveness.»*

Meanwhile, in London, there was not yet an open rift between the two opposing fractions led by Odger and Potter. Conflicts and clashes grew more frequent, exploded on every occasion, and were often of a personal nature. This was the case with the agitation against the *Annuities Bill* put forward by the Gladstone government in February 1864, by which the Royal Mail could sell limited amounts of government bonds.

On this occasion—although Beatrice and Sidney Webb say that the trade unions were in favour of this measure—not only the "old trade unionists", who said that they refused to accept any relationship between state institutions and workers' issues, opposed it, but also the London Trades Council and the various friendly societies that saw a threat to the development of the unions and the free friendly societies in some of the clauses of the Bill*.

Not only Potter, but also Cremer and Odger said they strongly opposed the Bill. And when, after a big demonstration led by Potter, Gladstone defended in parliament the aims of his Bill from the attacks of the trade unions, based—according to him—on the principle of violent repression of the minorities, on 15 March 1864, the London Trades Council decided to send a deputation (Odger, Applegarth and Coulson) to Gladstone, not—as Beatrice and Sidney Webb say—to *«disown Potter's action and accept the government's proposal to use the organs of administration to the advantage of the working class»*, but to present the workers' protests and objections to him.

Both Odger and Applegarth protested at the assertion that the trade unions were none other than coercive institutions and added that the workers' distrust was due to the fact that the government had not kept its repeatedly made promise to extend the franchise. Gladstone openly admitted that the Liberal Party had not really carried out its duty and said equally frankly that he himself was at fault regarding the trade unions. This made a great impression on the deputation and dissipated their doubts. After this meeting with Gladstone, Odger changed his position radically, giving rise to great discontent with him. It is highly likely that this clash led to his long-standing enmity with Potter.

In April 1864, during Garibaldi's visit to England, this enmity became an open rift. Odger and his collaborators succeeded in ousting Potter from the Working Men's Committee that had organised all the demon-

* The workers' organisations feared that the purchase of government bonds would divert the workers' savings from trade union membership fees at a moment of difficult organisational expansion, while an employers' campaign that accused the trade unions of using coercive and terroristic measures to force the workers to join them was taking shape.

strations. Odger was its chairman and William Dell, the future IWA administrative director, had been appointed treasurer. When Garibaldi, right after his enthusiastic London welcome, was ordered by the government to leave England, a workers' deputation—again made up of Odger, Applegarth, Cremer and Nieass—was charged with persuading Garibaldi not to yield to government pressure and, after his departure, with organising a street protest that was, however, dispersed by the police.

The English workers' leaders made efficient use of every circumstance to make the proletariat's point of view known. Thus, on the occasion of the three hundredth anniversary of William Shakespeare's birth, they organised a mass demonstration at Primrose Hill, after the government had forbidden it in Hyde Park. The "Annual Register" states that this was the only public event in honour of Shakespeare in London.

In early June, this group of leaders again tried to relaunch the movement for the extension of the right to vote. The impulse behind this was provided by Palmerston's speech on the occasion of the *Country Franchise Bill* proposed by Locke King. Palmerston stated that he did not discern any pressure in the country for the need to reform the right to vote. Odger and his collaborators therefore decided to demonstrate that this was not the case. They published an appeal in which they claimed the right to vote for all those who were in a suitable position from a moral and intellectual point of view. This appeal was signed by Odger, John Weston, William Cremer and Thomas Facey.

As early as 22 June 1864, a big meeting was held in Freemasons' Hall. It was chaired by Edmond Beales and its main speakers were again Odger, Howell, Davis, Worley, G. H. Wheeler and G. B. Leno. As a result of this agitation, in September 1864 (hence almost on the eve of the meeting founding the IWA), a new organisation was created, called the *Trades Unionist Manhood Suffrage Association*, and chaired by Odger.

A worker candidate in the French elections. The "Manifesto of the Sixty Workers of the Seine", the February 1864 programme of French "socialism".

Let's return to France. The "Address to the Workmen of France from the Working Men of England"—as we already know—had been translated into French by Beesly and conveyed to the French workers by Jourdain. This cannot have occurred before the end of November or the beginning of December 1863, perhaps even later. In any case, the "Address" reached Paris when Tolain and his collaborators were

working on presenting a worker candidacy for the by-elections in the first and fifth Paris districts*.

[After the previous elections], this had become a difficult task. The fervour of the Republican opposition made the presentation of a worker candidacy even more difficult. Not only Tolain, who had been presented as a candidate, became politically suspect, but also all the democrats on the side of his candidacy, such as Henri Lefort, who acted as a mediator between the workers and the Republicans. The Republican opposition, now even stronger than before, saw behind the worker candidacy another attempt to conjure up the "red spectre" in order to compromise it with the bourgeoisie, and suspected that there was a connection with Palais Royal**.

To dispel these suspicions and justify the need for a worker candidacy, it was decided to publish a manifesto, formulated in the course of a number of meetings held in Henri Lefort's home. In the main, the text is Tolain's work. Known as the "Manifesto of the Sixty Workers of the Seine" from the number of those who signed it, it was published for the first time on 17 February 1864 in "L'Opinion Nationale", and was reproduced straightaway in many other Paris and provincial newspapers. This document is of great importance since it is the clearest illustration of the general positions of the French workers who founded the IWA in France and who played an important role in it. We therefore believe that it is necessary to report it in detail.

The manifesto observed that, at the beginning of the previous year, the Paris workers had voted for the Republican opposition list, thus demonstrating their devotion to liberty. The hypothesis of a worker candidacy had been considered of secondary importance and the vast problem of pauperism had not been posed.

It was therefore necessary to consider the exceptional situation that gave the previous year's general election a particular character. In fact, the situation in the next by-elections was totally different. The opposition had already won a great victory in Paris, and newly elected officials would not add anything to its strength, quite apart from the fact that the "Manifesto of the Sixty Workers of the Seine" stated that it agreed with it on political matters.

> *«But if we agree on policy, do we agree on social economy? Are the reforms that we desire, the institutions that we demand the liberty to found, accepted by all those who represent the liberal party in the legislature? That is the question, the Gordian knot of the situation.»*

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* In March 1864.

** The residence of the Emperor's cousin.

The mere fact that the workers were compelled to justify their right [to elect their own representative] indicated that the situation was not normal. Universal suffrage had made them adults politically, but they still had to emancipate themselves socially:

> *«We repeat it until we're blue in the face: there are no more classes; since 1789, all the French are equal before the law.*
> *But we who have no other property than our arms, we who undergo every day the legitimate or arbitrary conditions of capital, we who live under exceptional laws, such as the Anti-Combinations Act and Article 1781, which harmed our interests at the same time as our dignity, find it quite difficult to believe in that assertion.*
> *We who, in a country where we have the right to appoint the deputies, have not always the means of learning how to read; we who, for want of the power to gather, to associate freely, are powerless to organise professional instruction, this precious instrument of industrial progress that we see becoming the privilege of capital, cannot delude ourselves about equal political right in such a situation..*
> *We whose children often spend their younger years in the demoralising and unhealthy environment of the factories, or in apprenticeship, which even today is very similar to a state close to domestic servitude; we, whose wives inevitably desert the hearth for excessive labour, contrary to their nature and destructive of the family; we who do not have the right to agree to defend our wages peacefully, to insure ourselves against unemployment, we affirm that the equality written in the law is not in the customs, and that it has yet to be realised in the facts. Those who, deprived of higher education and capital, cannot resist selfish and oppressive demands through liberty and solidarity, are inevitably subject to the domination of capital: their interests remain subordinated to other interests.»*

The manifesto also stressed that the workers would defend their interests in a rigorously legal way. They stated that they had no intention of using their freedom to organise strikes straightaway. They worked towards a greater end and it made no sense to wear themselves out in daily battles. They did not hope for the support of the bourgeoisie, but to win the same freedom of action. Nor could they be accused of dreaming of agrarian laws, chimerical equality, the sharing out of goods, prices imposed by law, or forced taxation. These would be slanders.

> *« Freedom to work, mutual credit associations, and solidarity, these are our dreams. The day when they are realised, for the glory and prosperity of a country that is dear to us, there will be no more bourgeois nor proletarians, no bosses nor workers. All the citizens will be equal in rights.»*

There then follows the confutation of the arguments used against the worker candidacies. According to the "Manifesto of the Sixty Workers of the Seine", without direct representatives, their principles would not be represented in the legislature. Or rather, voices would be raised in favour of the workers, but none would express their demands clearly. The workers do not intend to be treated as second-class citizens: *«We do not want to be clients or to be assisted; we want to become equals; we reject alms; we want justice.»*

Nobody has said [in parliament]—continued the manifesto—that unmerited poverty, disease and unemployment will disappear. Nobody has said that the Anti-Combinations Act is no longer anything but a scarecrow and that it has only perpetuated the evil against which it was directed. As regards the trade-union organisations, a strange confusion was established in the minds of those who recommended them: according to them, they should be made up of bosses and workers, as a sort of professional labour court, arbiters responsible for ruling from day to day on the questions that emerge. Actually, the workers ask for an association made up exclusively of workers elected by universal suffrage among the workers, a Chamber of Labour, a *Chambre du Travail.* No one has spoken of the considerable working class movement to organise mutual credit associations, an aim for which, yet again, they need freedom. All the qualities that are not recognised in the workers—eloquence, universal knowledge, and a well-known name—do not constitute indispensable requirements [for their candidates]. The mere fact that they represent the demands of the masses will give them the necessary authority. Universal suffrage, the freedom of the press, freedom of association and the right to form and to join trade unions, the complete separation of the Church and the State, a balanced budget and municipal franchises, all this is hoped for by the workers with no less ardour than by the liberal bourgeoisie. There are, however, questions that are even more important for the workers: primary education, free and compulsory, and freedom to work. *«Without us,* [...] *the bourgeoisie can establish nothing solid.»*

The manifesto sums up the specific significance of the worker candidacies in the following words:

> *«To strengthen, by supplementing it, the action of the liberal opposition, which has asked for the essential liberties in too modest terms. The worker deputies will demand the necessary economic reforms.»*

As can be seen, it is hard to glimpse in this manifesto anything that is not a faithful reproduction of Proudhon's fundamental ideas. And if this circumstance crops up even more frequently, this can be explained by the fact that, among the "Sixty Workers", we find the same men that will later be known as the most resolute Proudhonists in the IWA. Proudhon's fundamental ideas about the workers' political programme were set out yet again precisely in this manifesto, in a form capable of gaining the widest support among the French workers. In fact, his last work, "De la capacité politique des classes ouvrières"—published right after his death and the foundation of the IWA, and which the "Manifesto of the Sixty Workers of the Seine" had inspired Proudhon to write—became the main source from which the French members of the First International drew all their arguments.

Nevertheless, participation in the elections was not typical of Proudhon. This was a political action based on the right to vote, which Proudhon had firmly opposed as late as 1863.

What characterises the manifesto is not so much its theoretical content, which is actually an attempt to unveil the contradiction between the social practice and the general principles of bourgeois democracy. The authors were not in favour of a workers' party in conflict with the opposition, but of a workers' party that would represent the immediate demands of the moment better than the opposition did.

What distinguishes the manifesto is the emphasis that it places on the principle whereby the workers' emancipation is the task of the workers' themselves...not in the sense that this emancipation means a radical overturning of the existing economic order, but in the sense of using all the possibilities that this offers. The authors of the manifesto do not support "class struggle", but "class co-operation". And Proudhon's posthumous work made such a great impression on Tolain and his colleagues precisely because it offered them a complete working programme that would ensure their political independence vis-à-vis the liberal opposition.

At first, the "Sixty" met with a cool reception. The manifesto was not passed over in silence: it was published not only in Paris, but also in many provincial newspapers. Even abroad, especially in Belgium, it aroused much comment. But it was looked on with great distrust. Very soon, it was opposed by another manifesto, in which eighty workers rejected independent worker candidacies and expressed their trust in the Republican opposition.

The fact that Tolain's candidature was backed by such Republicans as Étienne Arago, Jean Macé and Bancel, and that Tolain published in his appeal a letter from Delescluze, Noël Parfait and Laurent Pichat, in which they warmly recommended his candidature, did not have a positive effect. In fact, Tolain polled just over 400 votes.

But if the immediate results of this election campaign were so poor, the political significance of the worker candidacy and the agitation that accompanied it were so great that they aroused the indifferent masses of the working class from their lethargy. This agitation may be said to have forced the government to make serious changes in the Anti-Combinations Act.

True, the new 25 May 1864 Act did not grant the right to form and to join trade unions for a long time yet. The new drawing up of Articles 414-416 of the Penal Code reduced the punishment in force, but left the old, arbitrary, judicial practice intact. Furthermore, there was no reform of the legislation regarding unions and assemblies, which considered as illegal the constitution of trade unions without previous authorisation and every assembly with more than twenty participants.

Nevertheless, the new conditions made it possible to form various organisations that did not clash directly with the rules of law, thus favouring the intentions of those workers who kept within the framework of the laws in force.

This was the viewpoint of Tolain and his colleagues. This group had to wage a political struggle against the deputies, while at the same time defending itself from the suspicions and accusations of the revolutionary minority of the Paris workers, who, led by the Blanquists, gave birth to secret organisations. How hard it was for them to fend for themselves without the help of their "bourgeois" members was also demonstrated by the March 1864 by-elections.

Contacts for the creation of an international association. The September 28 1864 meeting in St. Martin's Hall.

The collaboration of the opposition's emigrants and intellectuals also turned out to be indispensable to the continuation of the negotiations with the English workers—promoted precisely by Tolain and his colleagues. Lefort himself, who had done them so many favours during the election campaign, acted as the go-between. As he relates himself in his letter to the "Rappel" editorial staff (5 July 1870), in 1863 he had been delegated by a group of Parisian workers to present the proposal of an international association to London. On that occasion, his friend Le Lubez, who acted as interpreter, had introduced him in the course of a meeting of English workers chaired by Odgers. A "Paris Workers' Address", which found a broad consensus, was presented. Lefort saw the origins of the IWA in that meeting.

But it is inexact to place these events in 1863, as can be deduced from the following passage:

> *«The idea was explained more clearly and its realisation was promoted by a group of workers, with whom I had been put in touch regarding citizen Tolain's worker candidacy».*

Chemov, who reported Lefort's account, did not pick up this contradiction.

But another detail, which Lefort communicated to him verbally, should have drawn his attention to the mistake in the chronology. Lefort told him that in the meeting chaired by Odgers they had discussed the programme for welcoming Garibaldi to London. It is well known, however, that Garibaldi's stay in London lasted from 3 to 22 April, i.e. after the March 1864 elections.

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* This occurred in the first months of the following year.

We may therefore legitimately suppose that Lefort was in London in April 1864 and that he delivered the Paris workers' reply either to the well-known "Address to the Workmen of France from the Working Men of England", or to some other communication. Unfortunately, we cannot say exactly where the proposal mentioned by Lefort was made. In his meetings with the English workers, he availed himself of the help of the French exile Le Lubez, whom he had met during his stay in Jersey. The latter also states in a letter that, immediately after the elections, Lefort found out that the French workers had to answer a letter or an address from the English workers.

According to Tolain, after Jourdain had conveyed the English address to them and this had been read out at a meeting, he and his collaborators decided to reply with the proposal of a big workers' congress:

> *«Then came the 20 and 21 March elections and the election movement during which we met Lefort. This prevented us from proceeding immediately with the plan for the congress. In the post-election meeting called to assess the results, I proposed that the comrades who were present should read the answer to the English workers that I had been charged with preparing. Lefort, who was present and knew nothing about the matter, asked what it was about; we told him, informing him about the plan for the congress. He welcomed the proposal and, since he had to go to London, asked if he could convey our answer.»*

This statement dates back to 1865 and since it was also corroborated by Le Lubez who, in the clash between Tolain and Lefort—which we will talk about later—, sided with the latter, we can assert that from April 1864 on, Henri Lefort and his friend Le Lubez acted as intermediaries between the Paris and the London workers. But whether they should be considered the real founders of the IWA for this reason is a completely different matter.

Le Lubez maintained—and Max Nettlau believes him—that Lefort could think of founding an international association only because he, Le Lubez, was in London. Le Lubez said that

> *«Lefort thought: my friends Denoual and Le Lubez are in London; the latter must know the free-thinking English democrats, he speaks two languages and, as a Freemason, must also know a number of citizens of different nationalities. If I go to London, I can make use of him. Lefort arrived at my home, 4, New Cross Road, spoke to me of his idea and gave me the task of choosing those who would take part in the foundation. The Paris workers had warned him against Potter, "The Bee-Hive" editor, considered by them a jesuit who would sell anyone. It took me five months to find the right workers, English, Polish, German, Italian, Swiss, etc. And so, in the end, the meeting in St. Martin's Hall took place.»*

We have already observed that the matter was not so simple. Moreover, we also have another proof that the two friends, Lefort and Le Lubez, knew nothing about the preparatory steps taken up to March 1864.

Their adversary Tolain tells us about Lefort's further activity:

> *«We gave him this answer, together with the addresses of Potter, Bocquet and Jourdain. Thus began Lefort's activity. You* know better than me what Lefort did in London for our enterprise to succeed, but what you don't know is that, a fortnight after his return to Paris, he stopped participating in our meetings because he believed we were not proceeding fast enough. In no way, however, did his absence prevent us from continuing to pay our regular contributions to the cost of sending our delegates to London.*
> *Since Lefort had disappeared, our friend Perrachon was charged with going to see him to tell him that we were ready to leave. He promised to write to you, Le Lubez, to inform him. A fortnight went by without any reply. After Perrachon went to see him again, Lefort answered: "Because of your delay, the English believed that you attached little importance to the matter and have changed their minds about the public meeting. You will only be welcomed informally by the workers' unions". Public reception or not, we are ready, was the reply. Lefort: "Well then, I'll write and let you have their reply." At last, after Perrachon's final visit, Lefort told us that a public meeting would definitely be held and had been fixed for 28 September.»*

Whether or not Tolain is right, the fact remains that once again more than five months went by before the meeting planned for over a year was finally held and the Paris workers' reply finally delivered. In "The Bee-Hive" of 17 September 1864, we read the following communiqué. It begins with one of Giuseppe Garibaldi's quotations:

> *«When the people of France and England understand their duties and unite, the great problem of the future will be solved».*

He then continues:

> *«A public meeting will be held at St. Martin's Hall, Long Acre, on Wednesday evening, September 28, 1864, when a deputation appointed by the workmen of Paris will deliver their reply to the address of their English brethren, and submit a plan for a better understanding between the peoples. The meeting will be interspersed with songs, etc. Chair to be taken punctually at 8 o' clock.»*

In the 24 September issue, we can read another letter from John Weston inviting the London workers to prepare a warm welcome for the French workers.

The meeting, the birthplace of the IWA, was actually held on 28 September 1864. Since the reports of this historic meeting are very few, we have sought all the publications of contemporaries or direct participants. We find the most detailed account in "The Bee-Hive" of 1 October 1864.

Almost at the same time as "The Bee-Hive" account, another by Tolain had appeared in "L'Opinion Nationale". It was in the form of a letter to the editor and was dated 29 September. We should point out that it was written *ad usum Delphini***: much was omitted in order not to

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* Le Lubez.

** *Ad usum Delphini* means "for the use of the Dauphin". This was an expurgated collection of classical Greek and Latin texts used for the education of the Grand Dauphin, son of King Louis XIV.

arouse the suspicions of the police about this new organisation. There is not even one word about the speeches that were made. According to this account, it was only a debate about various matters that interested the workers (freedom to work, free trade, freedom of association, etc.), and that ended with the convocation of an international workers' congress to go deeper into these themes.

A more detailed French account was published in "Le Phare de la Loire" on 2 October 1864. Beesly's speech is reported as follows:

> *«He strongly condemned the occupation of Rome, but did not forget that of Gibraltar. He denounced Russia's behaviour in Poland and Circassia. He said that this behaviour was reflected in England's behaviour in Ireland, China and Japan, in the East Indies and above all in New Zealand, where the natives were killed only in order to rob them. There, the speaker stated, England was even crueller than Russia in Poland, since the Maoris wanted to live under the protection of English laws, whereas this was precisely what Russia was demanding from the Poles.»*

If we compare this account with Le Lubez's letter to Lefort, dated 29 September 1864, published for the first time by Chernov, we will immediately observe that these two documents coincide in the most important parts. We might even think that the account in "Le Phare de la Loire" was based on Le Lubez's letter. As Lefort explains, it was he who sent this account to "Le Phare de la Loire".

We have a further integration of "The Bee-Hive" account. Nettlau found two manuscripts among Paul Vésinier's documents: the programme of the meeting and the organisational plan written by Le Lubez.

The programme:

> *«Opening chorus by the German committee, called "The Workshop"—the Chairman's opening speech—Odger reads the "Address to the Workmen of France from the Working Men of England" (and announces resignations from the Committee*—Le Lubez reads the French workers' answer—Song "The Social Brotherhood of Man"—Lefort's speech, represented by Le Lubez—Song by the German committee—Resolution, proposed by … **, seconded by Dell and Eccarius, a German worker—Nomination of the new Committee—Vote of thanks to the Chairman, presented by Weston and seconded by Whitlock.»*

The text of the speech read by Le Lubez is reported as follows:

> *«To the workers' international meeting.*
> *Instead of hoping in Providence to improve their situation, instead of following the Christian teaching of "be content in whatever circumstances you are" or of "take no thought for the morrow", the workers of the two countries, believing that their needs and interests are the same, that the welfare of the one cannot be adversely affected without affecting the other, have decided to make between them and with the workers of the other countries a pact of fraternity and solidarity, thanks to which the situation of the whole working*

* These words are crossed out in the manuscript.
** Left blank.

> *class in every country may be raised from that of more or less subjugated and subordinate citizens to that of ones that are free and relatively independent.*
> *The organisational plan is as follows. A Central Committee, made up of workers from the different countries living in London, will be elected and will hold its meetings in London; other Sub-committees will be set up in the capital cities and other important cities of England and Europe. The Central Committee has the task of choosing the subjects for debate, which all the Sub-committees will have to examine and discuss, subjects about which they will provide information; the Central Committee will also have to publish in various languages the opinions expressed and the results achieved by all the Sub-committees. Next year, delegates from all the countries that have taken part in these debates will be elected to attend the First Congress, to be held in Belgium.*
> *There is no need to stress what a huge advantage such a congress, if well prepared and fruitfully conducted, could be for the workers of all countries. This movement has the right to the support of all the true friends of the human race.»*

The role played by Karl Marx and the involvement of the German émigrés in London. Comparison of the available sources.

This is all we have been able to ascertain about the English and French sources regarding the 28 September 1864 meeting. We do know, however, that German émigrés also took part in it. In fact, we learn from the aforementioned programme that Eccarius had been presented as one of the main speakers even before the meeting. During the meeting, Marx and Eccarius were appointed members of the provisional General Council. This thus poses a question: to what extent did the German Communists collaborate in the preparation of this congress?

The following passage from Marx's letter to Engels of 4 November 1864* helps us to resolve the question.

> *« […] Some time ago, London workers sent an address to workers in Paris about Poland and called upon them to act jointly in the matter.*
> *For their part, the Parisians sent over a deputation headed by a worker named Tolain, who was the real workers' candidate in the last elections in Paris, a thoroughly nice fellow. (His compagnons were quite nice lads, too.) A PUBLIC MEETING in St Martin's Hall was called, for 28 September 1864, by Odger (shoemaker, President of the local COUNCIL OF ALL LONDON TRADES' UNIONS and, in particular, also of the TRADES' UNIONS SUFFRAGE AGITATION SOCIETY, which is connected with Bright) and Cremer, a MASON and secretary of the MASONS' UNION.*
> *(These two had arranged the big TRADE-UNION MEETING on North America chaired by Bright in St James's Hall, ditto the Garibaldi manifestations.) A certain Le Lubez was sent to ask me if I would participate pour les ouvriers allemands, and, in particular, whether I was willing to provide a German worker to speak at the MEETING, etc. I*

* More fully reproduced in the Appendix.

provided them with Eccarius, who put on a splendid performance, and I was also present myself in a non-speaking capacity on the PLATFORM. I knew that on this occasion 'people who really count' were appearing, both from London and from Paris, and I therefore decided to waive my usual standing rule to DECLINE ANY SUCH INVITATIONS.
(Le Lubez is a young Frenchman, i.e. in his thirties; however, he grew up in Jersey and London, speaks capital English and is a very good intermediary between the French and English workers.)
(Music teacher and leçons OF FRENCH.)
At the MEETING, which was chock-full (for THERE IS NOW EVIDENTLY A REVIVAL OF THE WORKING CLASSES TAKING PLACE), Major Wolff (Thum-Taxis, Garibaldi's adjutant) represented THE LONDON ITALIAN WORKINGMEN'S SOCIETY. It was resolved to found a 'WORKINGMEN'S INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION', whose GENERAL COUNCIL is to have its seat in London and is to 'intermediate' between the workers' SOCIETIES in Germany, Italy, France, and England. Ditto that a General WORKINGMEN'S CONGRESS was to be convened in Belgium in 1865. A PROVISIONAL COMMITTEE was set up at the MEETING, with Odger, Cremer and many others, some of them former Chartists, former Owenites, etc., representing England, Major Wolff, Fontana, and other Italians representing Italy, Le Lubez, etc. for France, Eccarius and myself for Germany. The COMMITTEE was empowered to co-opt as many people as it chose[...]»

Among Marx's papers the following two letters were found, one from Eccarius, dated 26 September 1864, and the other from Cremer, dated 28 September 1864, some of the points of which confirm his description.

The first letter:

«Dear Marx,
I'm in an embarrassing situation. I have to speak at a public meeting about a programme of which I don't know the content and don't understand the language. Last night (after 11 pm), all that Odger could tell me was that it's about the press, a congress, a bank loan, mutual aid as regards the journey, etc. If by chance the French have been to see you and you know the content of the programme, let me know where and how I can pick up some points of the content. If I'm kept in the dark until I hear it read out tomorrow evening at the meeting, there'll certainly be very little I can say about it.
I've a lot to do today, otherwise I'd come myself. Salutations from your I. G. Eccarius.»

The second letter:

«Dear Sir,
The Committee organising the meeting mentioned in the enclosed note respectfully requests the favour of your participation. Presentation of this letter will allow you access to the Committee Room, where the Committee will meet at 7.30.
Respectfully, W. R. Cremer. To Dr. Marx.»

We also have Lessner's account:

«The English workmen have also invited the K.A.B members to this meeting and, in the meantime, asked us to persuade Karl Marx to be present. The K.A.B. sent me to Marx. I informed him of the English workmen's wish and, after asking for information about the promoters and aims of the meeting, Marx agreed to participate.»

These statements do not fully agree with what Marx wrote.

Nettlau, who deduced from what Lessner said that *«there is no way that we can speak of Marx's playing a part»* because he *«was far from the active group that finally succeeded in holding the meeting»* provides further evidence in the person of Hermann Jung:

«Jung told a Russian friend that before the foundation of the International he had written to fourteen of the '48 protagonists and other well-known figures (among them L. Blanc, Ledru-Rollin, Herzen, Bakunin, Mazzini, Marx and Eccarius) and that only Mazzini and Marx had replied.»

We do not know who this Russian friend is. It is nevertheless possible that Jung's story was reported accurately in his description. And yet the fact that Lessner, as a member of the IWA Central Committee, was presented for the first time and elected on 1 November (and not during the second session, as he narrates, but in the fourth)—as is also the case of Jung—casts doubt on Lessner's statements and even more on Jung's, whereas Marx was nominated from the very first session.

The following letter from Le Lubez to Marx, written two days after the meeting, also suggests that Marx had played a definite role before this meeting and that from the very beginning both the English and the French considered him an important member of the newly elected General Council. Furthermore, it is also evident from this letter —as from the previously mentioned letter of Marx to Engels—that Marx had not always been hostile to Le Lubez and his collaborators, as Nettlau presumes, without, however, backing his thesis with any concrete facts.

«Dear citizen,
I'm sending you the address of the Association's correspondents in Paris: Fribourg, etcher, rue Fontaine des Ternes 4, 18me arrondissement; H. Tolain, Rue Fontaine au Roi, 29; A. Limousin, lace-maker, Rue d'Orillon 34. Please present my respectful salutations to Mrs and the Misses Marx. I shake your hand cordially, Le Lubez.»

With the same peremptoriness with which Nettlau denies that Marx participated in the preparations for the St. Martin's Hall meeting, John Spargo* attributes the determining role to the two Germans:

«Marx and Eccarius entertained the idea of the International much sooner than Odger and other English workers' leaders thought of it. When in April 1864, the big meeting was held to protest against the brutal repression of the Polish uprising, six French delegates were present. At this meeting, a committee of English workers was formed to send a "speech of fraternity" to their French brethren[...] Eccarius was a member if this committee. Some see his hand in the successive developments of the plan and suspect Marx's inspiration. At one of its meetings, the committee decided to extend the range of the future meeting by inviting workers of other nations—of Germany and Italy in particular. It was no longer a movement aimed to create an Anglo-French alliance, but to create an alliance of the workers of all countries.

* In his 1910 biography of Marx.

For reasons that seem obvious in the light of what happened at the meeting, the committee wished to have the co-operation of the K.A.B. in particular, and a special resolution was passed to invite that organization to participate in the international meeting. The resolution expressed the "wish that Dr. Marx would participate in it as a delegate.»

Spargo's account is fully plausible, but unfortunately he does not indicate his sources. Lessner's version is known to us, but Spargo makes no mention of it. This is also true of Eccarius in his article in "The Times". It is highly likely that Eccarius and Lessner, as members of both the K.A.B and the English trade unions, came into touch with the English workers' leaders. It is just as possible that—as we mentioned previously—these relations were re-established during the big agricultural labourers' strike. Even more credible is that the agitation in favour of the Polish insurgents made them even stronger.

But this is all that the available documents allow us to state. What is certain is that Marx's presence at the 28 September meeting and his election as a member of the General Council prove quite irrefutably that he was not very far away and that, directly or indirectly, he was in touch with "the active group that finally succeeded in holding the meeting". Unfortunately, not even the following letter by Professor Beesly contains any factual elements. It is the reply to the request made by the London correspondent for "Vorwärts", Max Beer, author of "A History of British Socialism", and was published as a contribution to the history of the IWA on the occasion of its fortieth anniversary.*

«Forty Years after the International.
The first meeting of the IWA that I chaired was mainly made up of English trade unionists, the most intelligent of the working class and the most interested in general affairs. Few, perhaps even none of them, belonged to any kind of socialist school. The majority of them—I believe—would have hesitated to call themselves socialists. They wanted the vote in order to eliminate the anti-trade union laws. They had joined the International because they had warm feelings of fraternity with their workmates on the continent, to whom they felt more closely tied than to the propertied classes of their own country. They believed that the International could contribute to preventing wars and discouraging militarism.
As I see it, this is, if not the sole, the main task to which an international association can devote itself to great advantage. The very efficient effort of the French Socialist Party in this sense seems to me to be a positive sign of the times. It is truly deplorable that militarism in England and Germany has not yet met with the same resistance.»

Just to be thorough, we also report an account that is purported to come from one of the Italian participants in the meeting. It is the opinion of Amilcare Cipriani, the former revolutionary. On 19 August 1910, he wrote to the Italian historian Giovanni Domanico:

* In "Vorwärts", 28 September 1904.

«You want to know what role I played in the foundation of the International. First of all, I have to say that it was by a sheer fluke that I found myself at that meeting, the fame of which no one at the time could have foreseen. I was passing through London when I was introduced by chance to Marx, Engels and others, whose names I have forgotten, and who then became the founders of the International Working Men's Association. Mazzini was invited to take part in this meeting, which was held in St. Martin's Hall, behind the National Gallery in Trafalgar Square. The great Republican refused, so an Englishman, whose name I don't remember exactly, asked me to replace him as the Italian representative. I tried to get out of doing this for a while, but agreed in the end and the following day, 28 September, we met in the now historic hall. Apart from three or four people, I didn't know the others. I think the meeting lasted a couple of days. The ones who took the floor most often were Engels and another two whose names I didn't know. When everything was over, we parcelled out the printed matter, provisional rules and other papers and I went back to Egypt.»

Although there can be no doubt about the sincerity of this witness, his account sounds so fantastic that it leads us to doubt even the fact that Cipriani was in London in September 1864. The official representatives for Italy were Wolff and Lama. At that moment, Engels was in Manchester and, as we saw earlier, heard about the events from Marx. The meeting did not last two days, but one evening. Furthermore, Cipriani writes that he met Mazzini only in 1867, via Wolff and Domenico Lama.

Perhaps the whole story can be clarified if we consider that in that period, i.e. September 1864, Cipriani, in the name of the local workers' circle, had sent the London workers a message of solidarity from Alexandria on the occasion of the welcome they had organised for Garibaldi and that this fact, which coincides with the foundation of the IWA, had got mixed up in his mind with others he had experienced in London in 1867.

As regards Mazzini, although he subsequently wrote a series of articles about the IWA and his relations with it, neither does he tell us anything about the founding meeting. He does not even mention receiving an invitation, nor does he explain why he refused it.

This is all we can find in the sources— in my opinion not very abundant—about the historic 28 September meeting. We shall try to paint a synthetic picture of it later on.

The meeting in St. Martin's Hall according to "The Bee-Hive" account.

As proposed by Butler, Professor Beesly was elected Chairman. Welcomed with loud applause, he opened the meeting. He said that it derived ultimately from the participation of a delegation of Paris workers in the St. James's Hall meeting on Poland. In fact, subsequent to this meeting, a committee of English workers was formed. This planned and presented an address expressing fraternity to the Paris workers. This address led to

the present delegation, sent by the Paris workers with an address in reply. The aim of the present meeting was to welcome this delegation and to receive this address.

He stated that he trusted the results of the meeting would be to create a co-operative and fraternal feeling between the workingmen of England and all other countries. He then entered at some length into the necessity of a close alliance between France and England, as necessary to secure and maintain the liberties of the world. He denounced the wrongdoings of governments in violating international rights, and said that the English government was as bad, if not worse, than many of the continental powers. England wrongfully held possession of Gibraltar from Spain, and her conduct in China, Japan, India, and elsewhere was cowardly and unprincipled.

He urged upon all present to divest themselves of those selfish feelings disguised often under the cloak of patriotism and to maintain only those principles which their consciences told them were right and just. He then contrasted the different modes by which Englishmen and Frenchmen endeavoured to work out the rights of labour, and concluded a most effective speech amidst loud cheering.

A choir of German workmen then sang in excellent style two pieces of patriotic music. Odger then read the address sent over by the English committee to the workmen of Paris, which was received with loud cheering.

Tolain, one of the French delegates, who was received with much enthusiasm, then read the reply of the French workmen, in French, which was afterwards read by Le Lubez in English, and received with loud acclamation. The following is the translation of this address:

«Brothers and Friends.

Yes, you are right. The feeling which brings us together is the sure indicator of a better future for the freeing of the peoples. Caesars, their foreheads stained with a bloody crown, must no longer divide among themselves peoples despoiled by the rapines of the great, and countries devastated by savage wars. Once more is Poland covered with a bloody shroud, and we have remained powerless spectators.

One single people oppressed puts the liberty of other peoples in danger. In the name of his own dignity, every free man, and every man who wishes to be free, owes assistance to his oppressed brothers.

No doubt we shall have many obstacles to overcome, and more than one will fall, bruised in the struggle. What does it matter; liberty and progress, like the soil, must be fertilised. Let us, then, gird up our loins and joyously prepare ourselves for the fray. Henceforward the people's voice must make itself heard on all the great political and social questions, thus letting the despots know that the end of their tyrannical tutelage has arrived.

Workers of all countries who wish to be free, it is now our turn to have congresses. The people is coming on the scene conscious of its strength, rising against tyranny in the political order, against monopoly and privilege in the order of social economy.

For a long time, each day industry develops its production thanks to scientific discoveries; the use of machinery, by facilitating the division of labour, helps to increase its power, while treaties of commerce, prompted by the doctrine of free trade, open new outlets for it everywhere.

Industrial progress, division of labour, free trade, those are the points which must fix our attention today, for they are going to modify the economic conditions of society profoundly. Urged on by the needs of the times, by the force of things, capitals are concentrating and organising themselves in mighty financial and industrial associations. If we do not take care, that force without a counterweight will soon reign despotically.

Without wanting to emphasise what is too often ridiculous in the advice lavished on us—economise—we see the future aristocracy seizing control of the smallest savings; moved by a charitable feeling, and by the need of protecting us, whether we will or no, they excel, by a thousand ingenious means, in taking from the workman the handling of his small capital, instead of stimulating his own spirit of initiative. Our small savings engulfed in this Pactolus would make us the humble servants of the princes of finance, while the division of labour tends to make of each workman a machine in the hands of the high lords of industry. In the presence of this clever and powerful organisation everything bends and gives way; man, left to himself, is nothing; he feels every day his liberty of action and his independence becoming less. Before this organisation, individual initiative becomes extinct, or is disciplined for this organisation's profit. Labour is the law of humanity, the source of public wealth, the legitimate basis of individual property. It must be sacred, free.*

*Now whatever the high priests of political and social economy may say today, we affirm that it is not so. Learned theoreticians, bent over their bulky books, formulate axioms which are cruelly contradicted at our expense. They seem to want to look at the question from only one end of the telescope, that of consumption. According to the law of supply and demand, the workman is likened by them to a manufactured article. Didn't an illustrious British statesman say: when two employers are running after one workman, wages go up; when two workmen are running after one employer, wages go down.***

When capital, that fruitful auxiliary of labour, becomes its implacable ruler, the workman is reduced to starvation—that is called the exchange of services, freedom of transactions. When, placed in unfavourable conditions, the manufacturer cuts the price of manual labour to re-establish the broken equilibrium between him and his rivals—that is called free competition. As if free trade had to have as its result only a change in the field of battle. What would be the use of general pacification, of burying deep in the ground of our arsenals the rifled cannon, the precision arms, if thanks to steam and electricity, we had to replace them with still more terrible engines of destruction?

No, free exchange, completed by the freedom of labour, would not perpetuate the strife, but would, on the contrary, develop the aptitudes and the genius of each people, at last changing hostility into emulation.

Thus, through the want of professional instruction, science is the privilege of capital. By the division of labour, the workman is no more than a mechanical agent, and free exchange, without the solidarity of labourers, will engender industrial serfdom, more implacable and more fatal to humanity than that destroyed by our fathers in those great days of the French Revolution.

This is not a cry of hatred: no, it is a cry of alarm! We—labourers of all countries—must unite to oppose an impassable barrier to a deadly system which would divide humanity into

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* Pactolus: a small river in Lydia (Asia Minor). According to legend, King Midas, whose touch transformed everything into gold, bathed in this river. Hence figuratively, Pactolus means a source of wealth.

** Earl John Russell.

*two classes: an ignorant common people, and plethoric and big-bellied mandarins. Let us save ourselves through solidarity!»**

Le Lebuz then said he would give the meeting an outline of the programme of the French workmen. They suggested that a central committee should be established in London, consisting of workingmen of all the countries which it was intended the union should represent. The central commission would appoint sub-committees which would sit in all the capitals of Europe, and which would correspond with the central committee in London. The central committee would suggest questions for discussion, and on these the opinions of all the sub-committees could be simultaneously expressed, and the result of their deliberations transmitted to the central committee.

At present they were not in a position to frame any laws for the government of such unions, as these must be in harmony with the laws of the respective countries embraced in the operations of the union. It was therefore proposed in the course of next year to hold a workingmen's congress in Belgium, at which would be present representatives from the working classes of the different countries, and where the matters necessary for the regulating and carrying out of measures for the government of the union would be considered and agreed upon.

The German choir favoured the meeting with another of their melodies. Le Lubez then read a speech written by Lefort (the English version calls him "the organiser of the movement of the French workmen.

«Citizens!
Liberty! This is the first word uttered aloud, or mentally, by the Frenchman who comes from France, and who arrives in England. And we shall not fail that word, since by your right of free meetings we can here propose to you the Holy Alliance of Equality.
Equality! That is also the first word uttered by the Englishman who comes to France from England. But when one analyses these words profoundly, one has the painful conviction that you, Englishmen, are not truly free, allow me to tell you, and that we, Frenchmen, are not truly equal.
What is indeed liberty without equality? What is equality without liberty?
It is an incomplete organism which has not all the fullness of life to which the legitimate ambition of man has a right to aspire. Inequality means the inferiority of some. Can you indeed be truly free towards him who is your superior, not by natural abilities increased by personal work, but by the power of institutions arbitrarily constituting original privileges? And can we be really equal where liberty is the privilege of a few? I have defined despotism!
It is useful, I believe, to say and to repeat these truths—the essential elements of our progress: liberty and equality cannot exist one without the other; they form together a complete whole. Beware of the snare laid by aristocrats and despots who would oppose one to the other; it is only when they are united that progress can arise, and you must pursue the conquest of equality as ardently as we must pursue the conquest of liberty.

* This is Le Lubez's original translation into English.

I do not believe, like many sincere friends of the people, that all social and political evil comes from ignorance. Most certainly, ignorance is a dark night for the mind, in which truth cannot appear. But I affirm that in England with the freedom of the press and of meeting, in France, after the great revolution of 1792, after 1830 and 1848—I affirm, I repeat, that the shadows have been dispelled (at least in great measure) by the brilliant rays of those liberties and of those revolutions, the luminous radiance of which still lasts and will last forever, whatever may be said or whatever may be done!
The evil arises not so much from ignorance, as from egotism and cowardice. Yes, I hope to be excused by my compatriots who have acquired such a great reputation for bravery on the field of battle, but I am going to ruffle their national prejudices. France would be much greater, much more glorious, in the true sense of the word, if they had resumed for the claiming of their social and political rights a little of that energy, of that French impetuosity which they lavished on the fields of battle in combat so fruitless, or rather fruitful in calamitous results, since they have served to develop the stupid superstition of "military glory", to aid in the triumph of the petty ambitions of despots, and to feed the hatred between peoples, and to divide them so as to make more secure the reign of all oppressors, whose raison d'être is just this antagonism between peoples.
We come to you in the endeavour to put an end to this state of things, and to say to you: Let us know each other. We come to ask you for the hospitality of liberty, so as to use it for our mutuaol triumph. Equality, Justice. How? By organisation. We are powerless when alone, not only as individuals, but as nations. We can achieve much by the union of those who know, and of those who dare.
We know where the evil lies. To find the remedy and to apply it, we must seek, we must dare, we must fight. We Frenchmen are shut up in the narrow prison of a legality badly defined, or rather, well defined when it is called: arbitrary power.
Well we shall use all our efforts to act, whatever may be the difficulties, "without fear and without reproach", and to rally the most timid around us by our prudent audacity.
And those who are not satisfied with proclaiming justice in theory, but who seek to realise it, shall no longer have occasion to say, "If we knew! If we could!" Thanks to our initiative and to yours, they will know, they will be able, they will be willing.
How? I cannot too often repeat it—by organisation. We are a battalion, let us become a regiment, let us become an army. It is time to have done with these eternal appeals to the good faith of those who are our adversaries or our enemies.
Cromwell said, "Trust in God and [...] keep your powder dry." That was well said. Peace to men of goodwill, so be it! But war to those of bad will.
Let our trust be in ourselves! Let us not think that progress is fatal, as certain philosophers, steeped in the solitary study of their abstractions, maintain. Progress is only a result of our efforts. We must not expect our salvation from the power of things; that is one of those expressions ready-made and badly made, as false as they are trivial. We must not wait; we must act. We must use, for the good of all, the power of men, the power they all have in some degree or other.
Things are passive, and have no worth but through the action we exercise on them. On our knowledge and on our energy, or on our ignorance and our apathy, depends their transformation into elements of good or evil.
What then is work? You know it, O workers! It is effort, it is the struggle against things to appropriate them to our use. The power of things is quelled by the power of men, intellectual, moral, material power.
Let us trust for our welfare only to the power of men, and let us be strong in union!

We are not sufficiently persuaded that each of us may become an agent of general progress by his individual efforts, however small they may be or may appear to be. We are not sufficiently convinced of the power of individual initiative.
My friends who speak English will tell you the means we propose for making effective the solidarity of the workers, by organising an association of theirs in all the nations where they want to achieve social equality. *»

Wheeler then moved the following resolution:

«That this meeting having heard the reply of our French brethren to our address, we once more bid them welcome, and, as their programme is calculated to benefit the labouring community, accept it as the basis of an international association; and hereby appoint a committee, with power to add to its number, to draw up the rules and regulations for such an association.»

In what the English account calls a very excellent speech, Wheeler argued the adoption of the resolution and expressed the pleasure he felt at seeing so crowded a meeting. He thought, when he looked at the despotism now exercised and the stringency of the law related to meetings of workingmen in France, that their French brethren were deserving of great credit for the manner in which they had acted.

William Dell seconded the resolution. He urged workingmen not to be contented with attending there that evening, but to labour earnestly and zealously in causing the meeting to result in good fruit. He energetically pointed out the way in which workingmen might contribute to bring about the glorious results contemplated by the meeting, and concluded amidst much applause.

The resolution was further supported by brilliant speeches: by the German workman Eccarius; by Major Wolff on the part of the Italian workmen; by the French workman Bocquet, and by Forbes, who drew the attention of the meeting to the wrongs of Ireland.

The resolution was then put to the meeting, and carried with acclamation.

A strong committee was then appointed containing workingmen of each nationality, for the purpose of applying the fundamental concepts of the resolution. The members of the committee were: Blackmore, Whitlock, Fox, Nieass, Noble, Hartwell, Odger, Gray Stainsby, Weston, Cremer, Morley, Pidgeon, Lucraft, Longmaid, Le Lubez, Wheeler, Leno, Lama, Eccarius, Trimlett, Howell, Denoual, Shaw, Shearman, Osborne, Richardson, Facey, Goddard, Kethrik, Bocquet and Marx.

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* In the English translation read at the meeting in St. Martin's Hall, Lefort's address ends with the following words: *«I regret exceedingly not being able to assist at your meeting, in the organising if which I have had a share, and for which I claim the favour and the honour of being among you by word and by deed in all the resolutions you may take.»* ("The Bee-Hive", October 22, 1864).

The meeting, characterised by enthusiastic participation, ended with a speech expressing hearty thanks to Professor Beesly: appreciation was expressed for his chairing of the proceedings and for his serious defence of the workers' interests. Three cheers for the French workers and three for the workers of all the other countries finally concluded the meeting.

The will to achieve an international working men's association emerges from the St. Martin's Hall meeting, but there is no common programme. What will be needed is the work of the General Council and, within it, of Marx.

By the time the St. Martin's Hall meeting finally took place, the Polish uprising, which can undoubtedly be considered the reason for the first meeting between French and English workers in July 1863, had already been crushed for quite some time. All hopes of the liberation of Poland in the near future had to be abandoned. The planned pressure on both governments in favour of Poland had not been able to achieve anything.

The Russian government, which had assured itself of the aid of Prussia thanks to the 8 February 1863 agreement, had not hesitated to use every possible means to crush the uprising as quickly as possible. Alongside the most ruthless repressive measures, there was also agrarian reform in favour of the Polish peasants. Not only did this earn the Russian government the applause of all of Europe's liberal press, but also Proudhon's benevolent judgement.

In his opening speech, in fact, Beesly recalled Poland, but together with other oppressed peoples. Tolain also reflected on what is usually considered the main subject of the IWA founding meeting, but only to observe the failure of the pro-Poland actions. Like the English address, he gave priority to the question: how can the workers of the different countries oppose their governments' power politics and put an end to the mutual bloodbaths between peoples?

This question had already been answered in the English address:

«As a means then to check the existing abuse of power, we echo your call for a fraternity of peoples. Let there be a gathering together of representatives from France, Italy, Germany, Poland, England, and all countries, where there exists a will to co-operate for the good of mankind. Let us have our congresses; let us discuss the great questions on which the peace of nations depends[...]»

Tolain is therefore mistaken when he writes that in Paris, after the reading of the English address, it had been decided to reply by proposing a big workers' congress. It would be more correct to say that they, too, wanted one.

The English address had also been determining from another aspect. It provided the general theme for the future workers' meeting, motivating it with the need for a joint struggle against the entrepreneurs:

> *«A fraternity of peoples is highly necessary for the cause of labour, for we find that whenever we attempt to better our social condition by reducing the hours of toil, or by raising the price of labour, our employers threaten us with bringing over Frenchmen, Germans, Belgians, and others to do our work at a reduced rate of wages; and we are sorry to say that this has been done, though not from any desire on the part of our continental brethren to injure us, but through a want of regular and systematic communication between the industrious classes of all countries, which we hope to see speedily effected, as our principle is to bring up the wages of the ill-paid to as near a level as possible with that of those who are better remunerated, and not to allow our employers to play us off one against the other, and so drag us down to the lowest possible condition, suitable to their avaricious bargaining.»*

And it is again the English address that prefigures one of the most important tasks of the future IWA: the struggle against the intrigues of secret diplomacy.

What does the French address contain? First of all, it also protests strongly against every form of oppression of the peoples. The French workers, too, were in favour of holding a congress of the workers of the different countries as soon as possible. They, too, drew attention to economic conditions but, unlike the English workers who gave priority to trade union action as the starting point, Tolain and his colleagues stressed the determining influence of the development of the productive forces, the consequent concentration of capital and the dominion of the big financial and industrial companies. Consequently, they would have liked to give priority in future debates to the questions of industrial development, the division of labour, and free trade. We find in this address the repetition, in a synthetic form, of Proudhon's criticism of capitalist competition and monopolies. The address ended with a mention of the harmful development of the division of labour and a recommendation for professional instruction.

Lefort's speech contains nothing that can make us see in him a "true socialist" or endow him—as, on the contrary, Nettlau believes—with an evidently socialist disposition, unlike the "workers' leaders and professional politicians" of the future IWA. Not only this speech, with which Nettlau was not acquainted, but also everything that we know about Lefort, disproves this thesis.

In the 1860s, and even later, Lefort was never a socialist, but a democrat whose sympathies were with the workers' movement and who saw the best way to improve the workers' conditions in the co-operative societies. And if in his speech he mentioned the need for an organisation, what he favoured was neither a trade union nor a political organisation.

If we consider the overall content of the St. Martin's Hall meeting, we can draw the following conclusion: everyone stressed the need to create an international association of the workers of the different countries, in order to prepare true fraternity among the world's peoples. The French proposed a programme that was about as socialist as that of the English. The Poles, Italians and Irish drew attention to their national demands. We do not know what Eccatius, the only German to take the floor at this meeting, said.

The English workers placed more emphasis on the usefulness of international trade union action and the worker-capitalist clash, while the French workers dwelt on the negative effects of the dominant economic order on the small producers and stressed the need to defend work as the base of private property. Both saw the lack of solidarity as the source of the workers' weakness in their struggle against the capitalists.

As regards the form of this future international organisation, it took the shape of an international debating society that would examine and discuss all the matters that might affect the workers. There was nothing in the resolution that might suggest an international organisation that would set itself the aim of taking any kind of practical step or of developing political or trade union activity at a global level.

This was all that had been defined when the newly elected members of the future IWA General Council met for the first time, after the St. Martin's Hall meeting, to carry out the task that had been entrusted to them: to draw up the rules and the programme of the new international association. Not even the name of this association had been decided upon.

The provisional General Council had to do all of this on its own. The drawing up of the programme was thus entrusted to the dialectic among the various opinions within the General Council.

Rjazanov had used the research that we have presented for an article published in the "Internationale Communiste" in October 1919. In his conclusions, which appear below, he made a summary of the role played by Marx in the birth of the First International.

It is hard to see Marx as the direct founder of the IWA but, from the very first meeting of the provisional General Council, he was the spiritual head of the organisation.

Backed by Eccarius, he struggled with all his might against every attempt to turn the new organisation into a mere variant of other old international associations, or to let it merge with any of the existing associations, such as the *Universal League*, in whose rooms the provisional Council held its first meetings.

During the second meeting of the provisional Council on 12 October 1864, a resolution proposed by Eccarius and Whitlock that the new association be called the "IWA" was adopted.

In the Sub-committee that was charged with drawing up its rules, Marx succeeded in ensuring the victory of the fundamental ideas of scientific socialism. Although he was obliged to make some concessions to the French and Italian revolutionaries, the "Inaugural Address" and the "Statement of Principles" that he proposed were approved by all the workers of the provisional Council as being the best expression of working class demands.

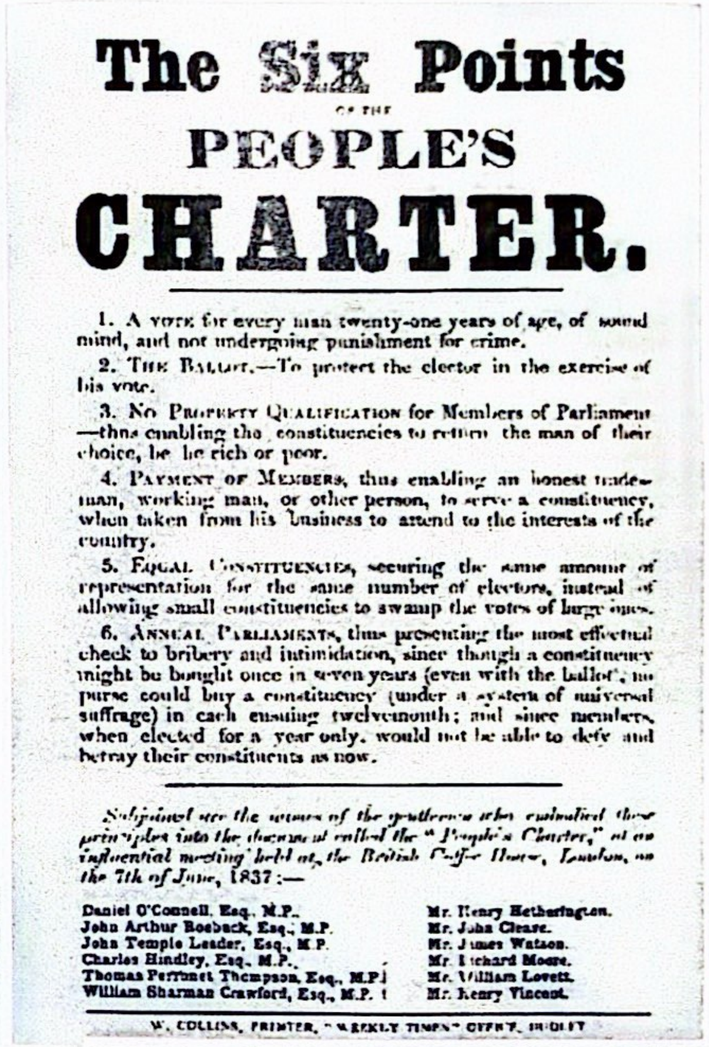
During the fourth meeting of the provisional Council on 1 November 1864, Marx read out his work: with a few changes in style, it was approved unanimously. From that day on, the First International had a programme, and the young organisation was able to begin its work.

The IWA "Inaugural Address" ended with the words

«Proletarians of all countries, unite!».

These were then put at the end of the now famous address of the first international workers' trade union. They had already appeared in the *Communist League* Manifesto, which was the first to indicate the union of the proletarians of all countries as one of the most important conditions for the liberation of the proletariat.

This motto, which at the time united a minority and was international more in its programme than in facts, is now that of a workers' organisation that has also become international in its composition. Thousands of workers united in the First International branches and groups and the union of the proletarians of all countries that they founded sees its rebirth today in the Third International, which unites millions of workers.



The Six Points
OF THE
PEOPLE'S
CHARTER.

1. A VOTE for every man twenty-one years of age, of sound mind, and not undergoing punishment for crime.

2. THE BALLOT.—To protect the elector in the exercise of his vote.

3. NO PROPERTY QUALIFICATION for Members of Parliament—thus enabling the constituencies to return the man of their choice, be he rich or poor.

4. PAYMENT OF MEMBERS, thus enabling an honest tradesman, working man, or other person, to serve a constituency, when taken from his business to attend to the interests of the country.

5. EQUAL CONSTITUENCIES, securing the same amount of representation for the same number of electors, instead of allowing small constituencies to swamp the votes of large ones.

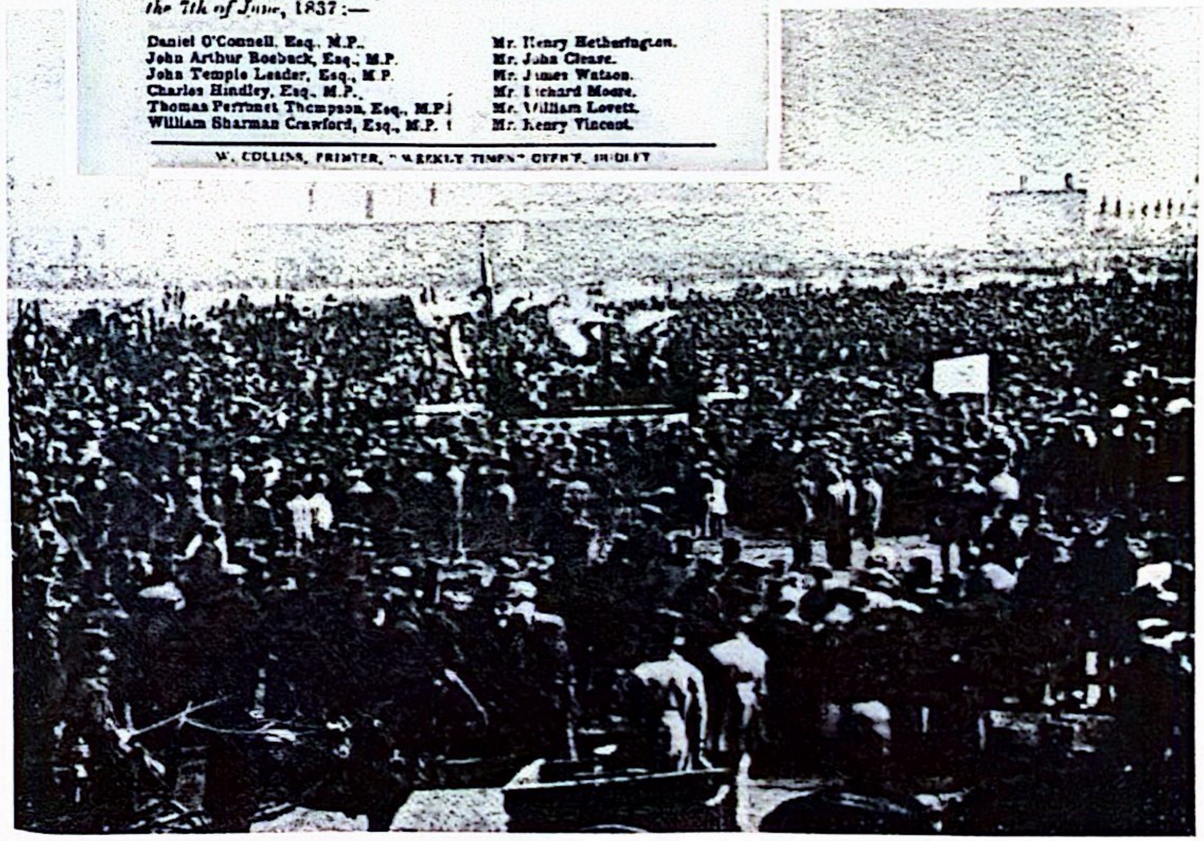
6. ANNUAL PARLIAMENTS, thus presenting the most effectual check to bribery and intimidation, since though a constituency might be bought once in seven years (even with the ballot), no purse could buy a constituency (under a system of universal suffrage) in each ensuing twelvemonth; and since members, when elected for a year only, would not be able to defy and betray their constituents as now.

Subjoined are the names of the gentlemen who embodied these principles into the document called the "People's Charter," at an influential meeting held at the British Coffee House, London, on the 7th of June, 1837:—

Daniel O'Connell, Esq., M.P.
John Arthur Roebuck, Esq., M.P.
John Temple Leader, Esq., M.P.
Charles Hindley, Esq., M.P.
Thomas Perronet Thompson, Esq., M.P.
William Sharman Crawford, Esq., M.P.
Mr. Henry Hetherington.
Mr. John Cleave.
Mr. James Watson.
Mr. Richard Moore.
Mr. William Lovett.
Mr. Henry Vincent.

W. COLLINS, PRINTER, "WEEKLY TIMES" OFFICE, IRELET

Six Points of the People's Charter; a document of the Chartist Movement, 1837.



The big 1848 Chartist demonstration on Kennington Common.

Neue

Rheinische Zeitung.

Politisch-ökonomische Revue,

redigirt von

Karl Marx.

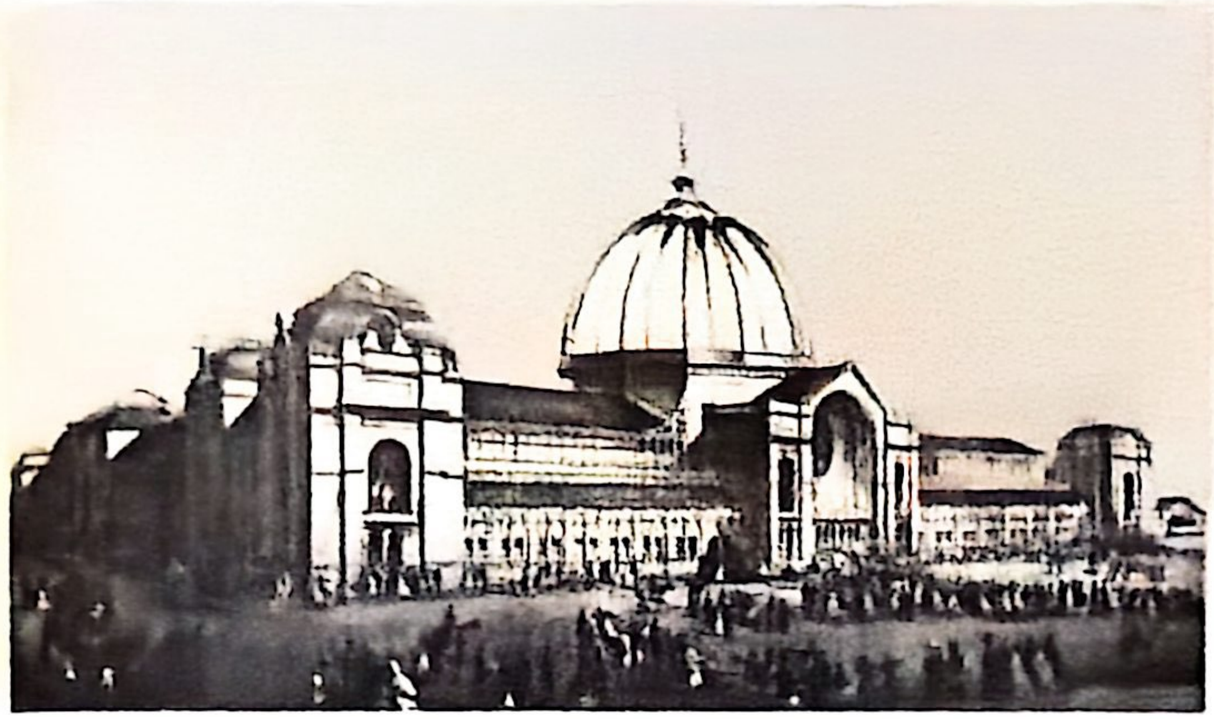
Zweites Heft. — Februar 1850.

Inhalt:

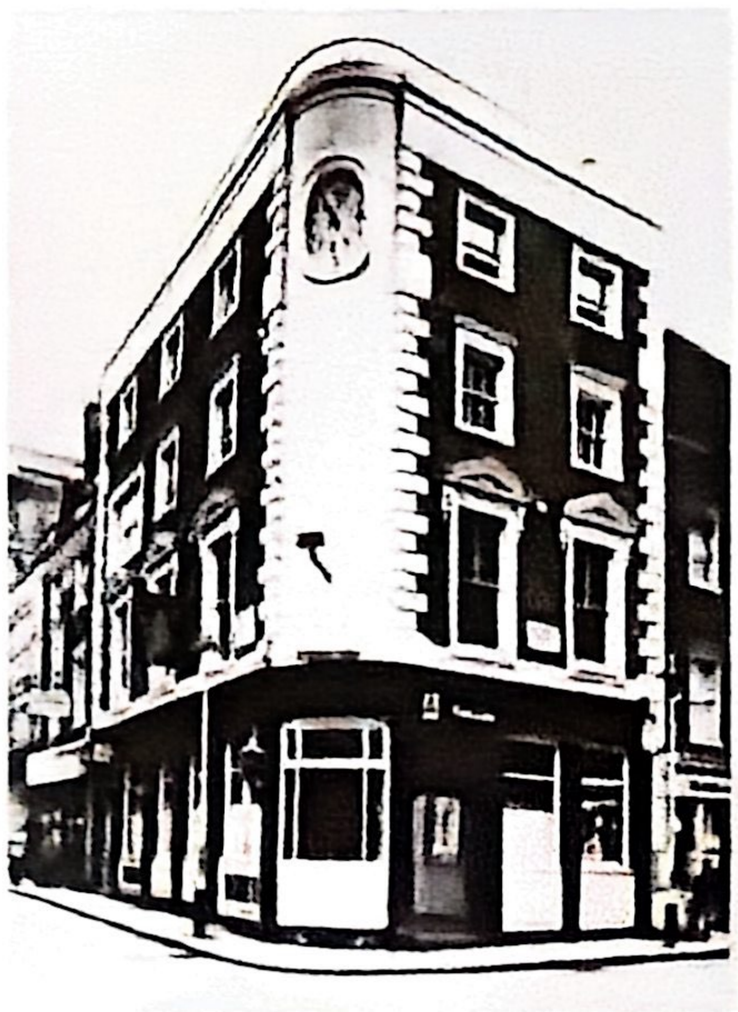
1848—1849. — II. Der 13. Juni 1849. Von Karl Marx.
Die deutsche Reichsverfassungs-Campagne. III. Die Pfalz. Von Friedrich Engels.
Literatur. I. Daumer, die Religion des neuen Weltalters. — II. F. Simon (von Trier), ein Wort des Rechts für alle Reichsverfassungskämpfer. — III. Guizot, Pourquoi la Révolution d'Angleterre a-t-elle réussi? Revue.

London,
C. Schramm, Oxford Street.
Hamburg und New-York.
In Commission bei Schuberth & Co.
1850.

The title page of the "Neue Rheinische Zeitung - Politisch-ökonomische Revue", the Communist League official theoretical and political organ, published in London 1850 with Marx as editor. W. Wolff, J. Weydemeyer and G. Eccarius wrote for it.



The Second International Exhibition in London, 1862



London's Red Lion Hotel, where the Second Congress of the Communist League was held in 1848

COMMEMORATION OF THE

Great Revolutionary Movement of 1848.

Alliance of All Peoples!

AN

INTERNATIONAL SOIREE,

FOLLOWED BY

A PUBLIC MEETING

ST. MARTIN'S HALL

LONG ACRE.

ON

Tuesday, Feb. 27, 1853.

[illegible] —

French: Louis Blanc, Victor Hugo. Barbes. Felix Pyat, Ledru Rollin. Raspail. Pierre Leroux. Eugene Sue. German: Kinkel. Marx. Ronge. Schapper. Italian: Pianciani. Saffi. Mazzini. Teleki. Hungarian: Kossuth. Polish: Worcell. Zeno Swientoslawski. Russian: Herzen. English: W. Coningham. J. Beal. J. Finlen. Cooper, Mayne Reid. Gerald Massey.

ERNEST JONES [illegible]

ALEXANDER TALLENDIER, French Sec. [illegible] SHELLEY, German Sec.

DAVID ROWSELL, Treasurer. [illegible] R. CHAPMAN, Engineer.

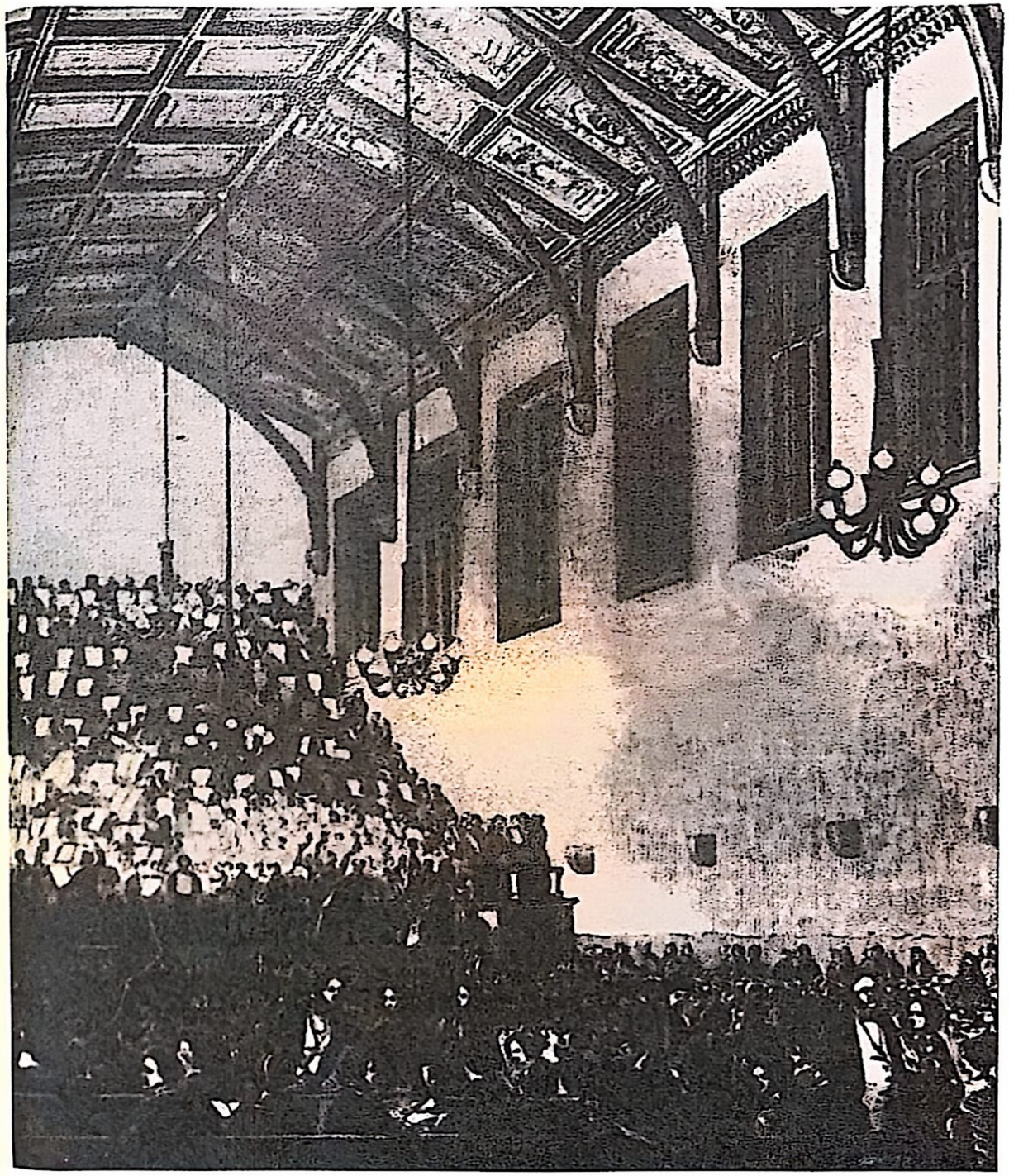
Tea on Table at Five. Doors open for the meeting at half-past Seven—to commence at Eight.

DOUBLE TICKETS, 2s. 6d., SINGLE DITTO, 1s. 6d., MEETING DITTO, 3d.

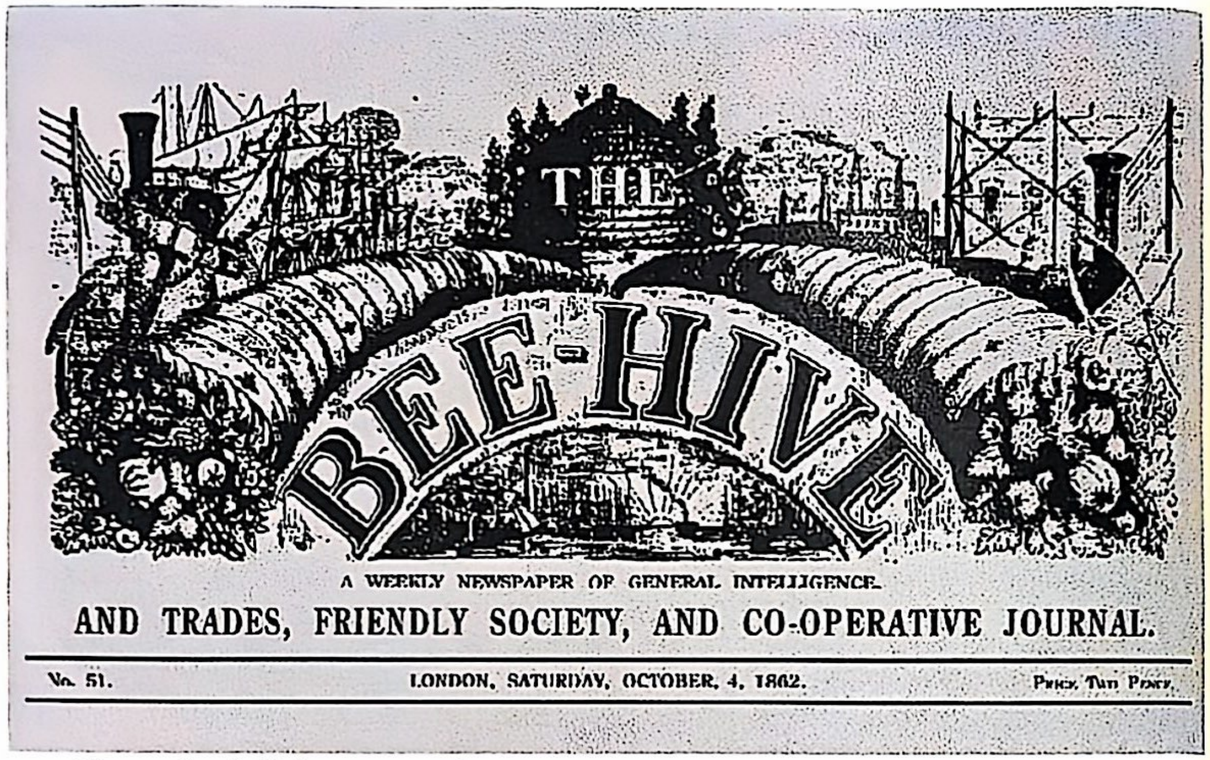
Tickets may be had at St. Martin's Hall.

W. H. Lees, Printer, 6, Upper Phoenix Place, Gray's Inn Road

The convocation of an international meeting at St. Martin's Hall to commemorate the 1848 revolutionary movement.



A view of St. Martin's Hall, built in 1850 near the working-class districts and demolished in 1879. It was often the meeting place of the radical and revolutionary political currents present in London.


THE
BEE-HIVE
A WEEKLY NEWSPAPER OF GENERAL INTELLIGENCE.
AND TRADES, FRIENDLY SOCIETY, AND CO-OPERATIVE JOURNAL.
No. 51. LONDON, SATURDAY, OCTOBER, 4, 1862. PRICE TWO PENCE.

The masthead of "The Bee-Hive", the most important workers' newspaper in London in the 1860s.

BEE-HIVE NEWSPAPER.

A JOURNAL OF GENERAL INTELLIGENCE ADVOCATING INDUSTRIAL INTERESTS

"When the people of France and England understand their duties and unite, the great problem of the future will be solved."—G. Garibaldi

A PUBLIC MEETING

will be held at

ST. MARTIN'S HALL, LONG ACRE,

On Wednesday Evening, September 28, 1864,

when

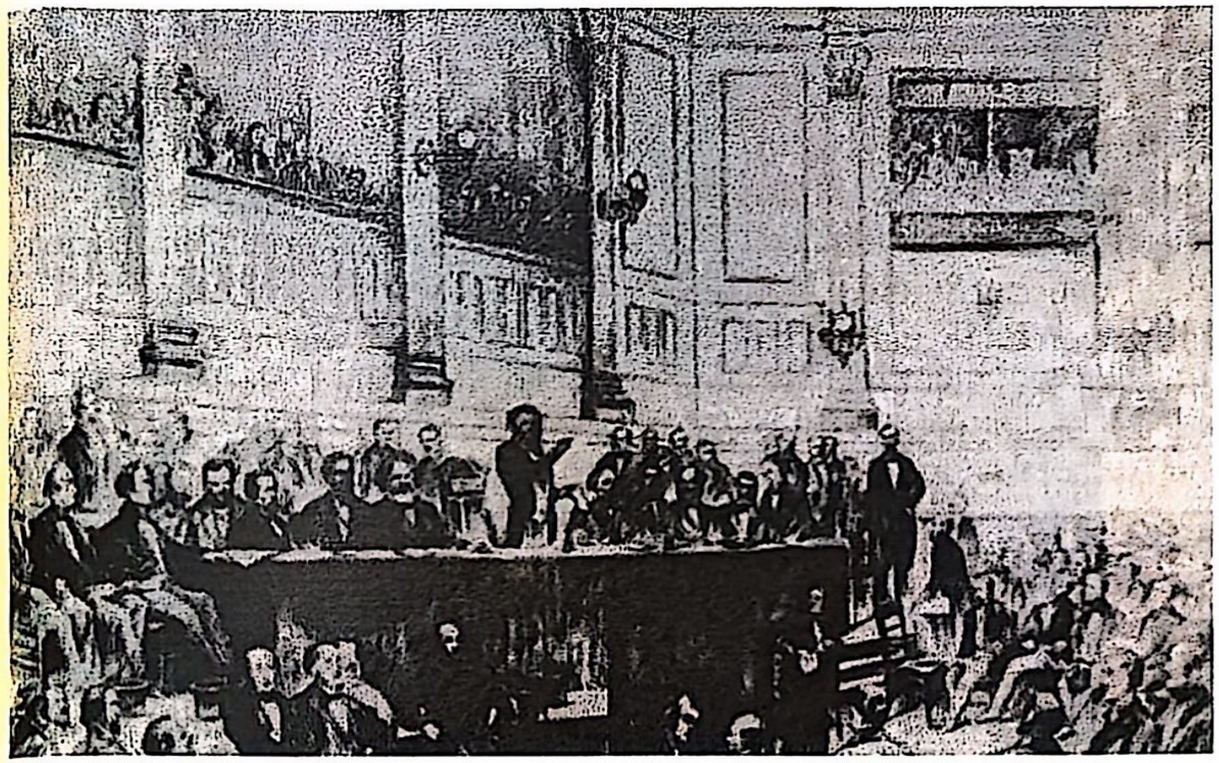
A DEPUTATION

APPOINTED BY THE WORKMEN OF PARIS

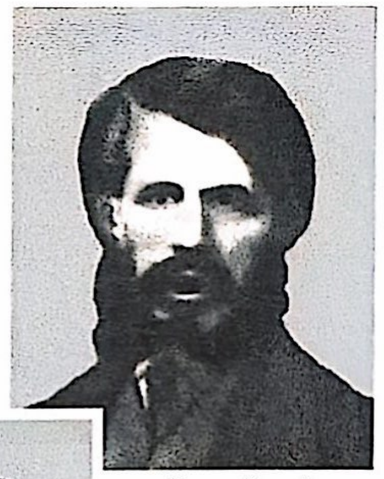
Will deliver their reply to the Address of their English Brethren, and submit a plan for a better understanding between the peoples.

The meeting will be interspersed with Songs, etc. Chair to be taken punctually at 8 o'clock.

Convocation of the 28 September meeting, published in "The Bee-Hive" of 17 and 24 September 1864.

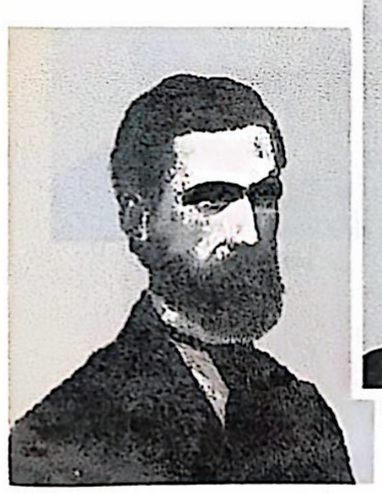


The chairing of the meeting in a drawing of the time.

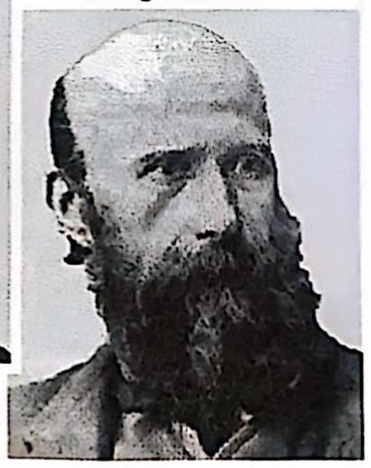


Georg Eccarius.

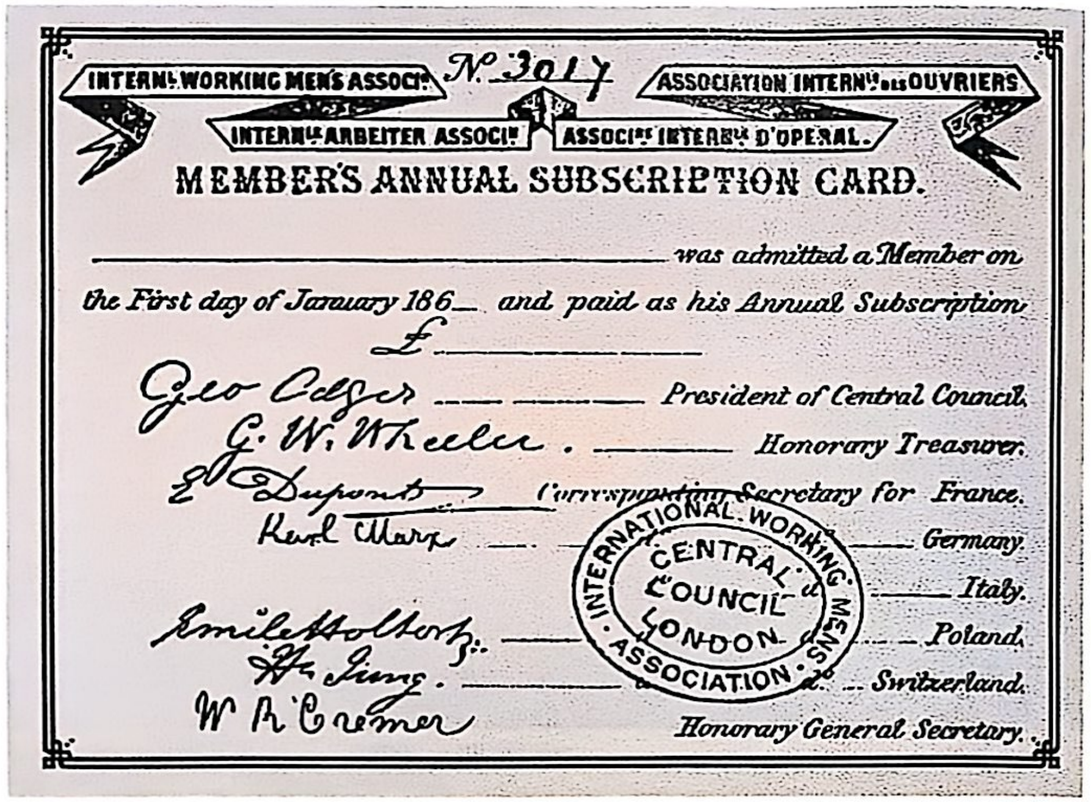
Edward Spencer Beesly.



Henri Louis Tolain.



George Potter.



INTERNL WORKING MEN'S ASSOCN. № 3014 ASSOCIATION INTERNLE DES OUVRIERS

INTERNLE ARBEITER ASSOCN ASSOCN INTERNLE D'OPERAL.

MEMBER'S ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION CARD.

_____ was admitted a Member on the First day of January 186__ and paid as his Annual Subscription £_____

Geo Odger _____ President of Central Council.

G. W. Wheeler _____ Honorary Treasurer.

E. Dupont _____ Corresponding Secretary for France.

Karl Marx _____ Germany.

_____ Italy.

Emile Holtorp _____ Poland.

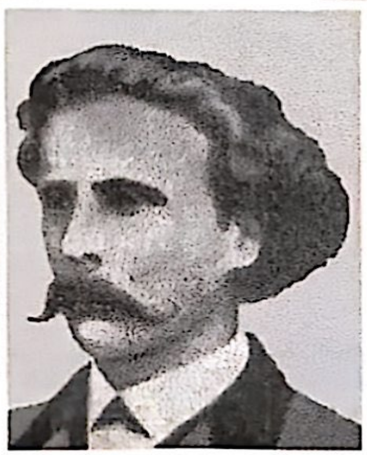
H. Jung _____ Switzerland.

W. R. Cremer Honorary General Secretary.

INTERNATIONAL WORKING MEN'S ASSOCIATION · CENTRAL COUNCIL · LONDON ·

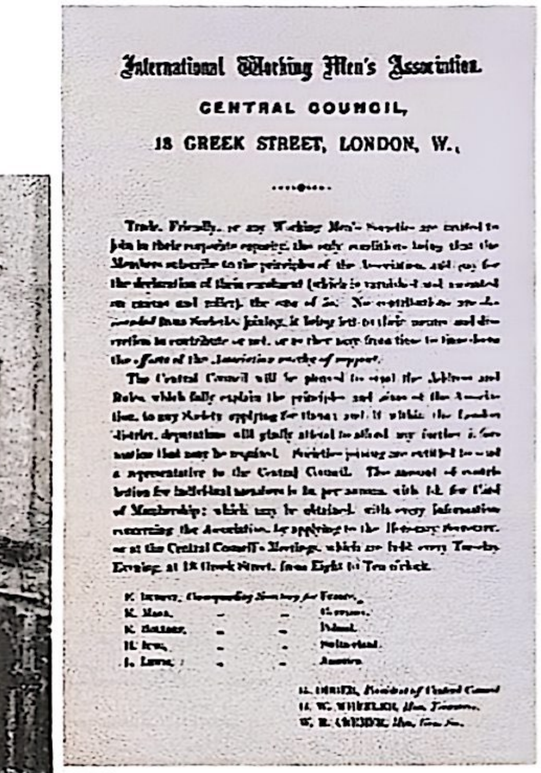
Subscription card of the International Working Men's Association, IWA.

George Odger.



Eugene Dupont.

Hermann Jung.



International Working Men's Association.

CENTRAL COUNCIL,

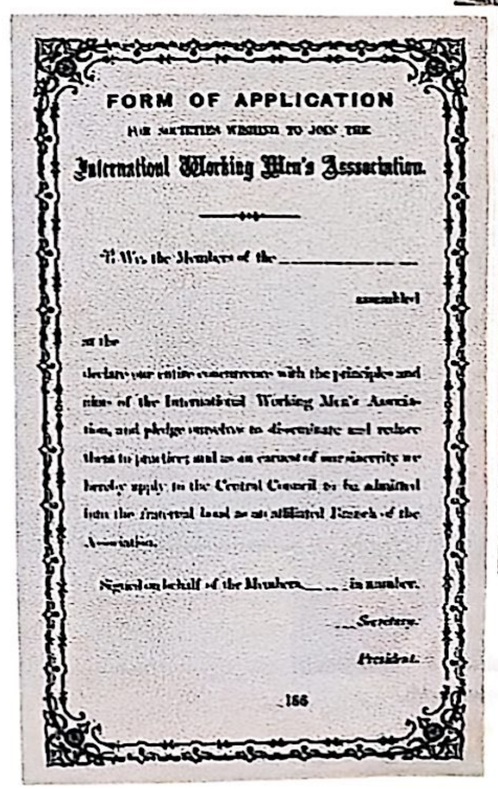
18 GREEK STREET, LONDON, W.,

Trade, Friendly, or any Working Men's Societies are invited to join in their respective capacity, the only condition being that the Members subscribe to the principles of the Association, and pay for the declaration of their enrolment (which is variable and accordant on caprice and relief), the sum of 1s. No contribution are demanded from Societies joining, it being left to their means and discretion to contribute or not, or to their own from time to time, the form of the Association worthy of support.

The Central Council will be pleased to send the Address and Rules, which fully explain the principles and aims of the Association, to any Society applying for them; and if within the London district, deputations will gladly attend to afford any further information that may be required. Societies joining are entitled to send a representative to the Central Council. The amount of contribution for individual members is 1s. per annum, with 1d. for Card of Membership; which may be obtained, with every information concerning the Association, by applying to the Honorary Secretary, or at the Central Council's Meetings, which are held every Tuesday Evening, at 18 Greek Street, from Eight to Ten o'clock.

K. MARX, Corresponding Secretary for France.
E. DUPONT, _ _ _
K. SHARPE, _ _ Poland.
H. JUNG, _ _ Switzerland.
L. LUCRAFT, _ _ Austria.

G. ODGER, President of Central Council.
G. W. WHEELER, Hon. Treasurer.
W. R. CREMER, Hon. Gen. Sec.



FORM OF APPLICATION

FOR SOCIETIES WISHING TO JOIN THE

International Working Men's Association.

We, the Members of the _____

assembled

at the

declare our entire concurrence with the principles and rules of the International Working Men's Association, and pledge ourselves to disseminate and enforce them to practice; and as an earnest of our sincerity we hereby apply to the Central Council to be admitted into the fraternal band as an affiliated Branch of the Association.

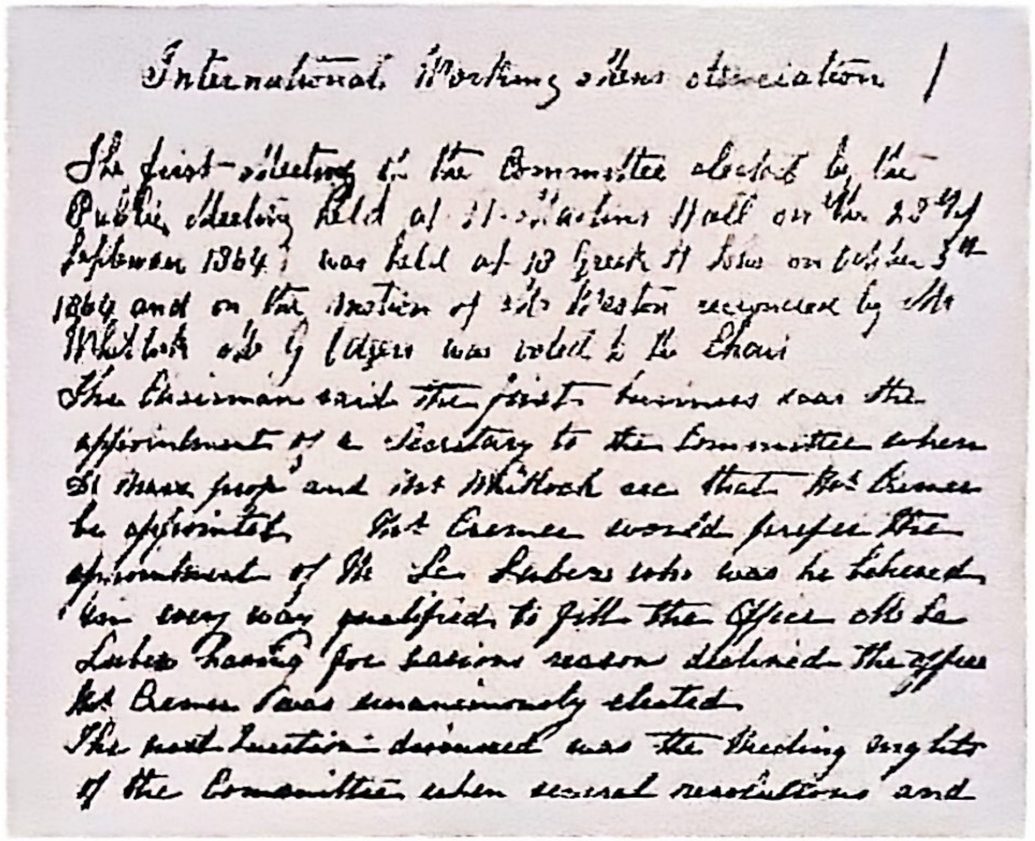
Signed on behalf of the Members____ in number.

_____ Secretary.

_____ President.

_____ 186

IWA documents and the London buildings in which its General Council met from 1864 [at the top] and 1868 [at the bottom].



International Working Mens Association /

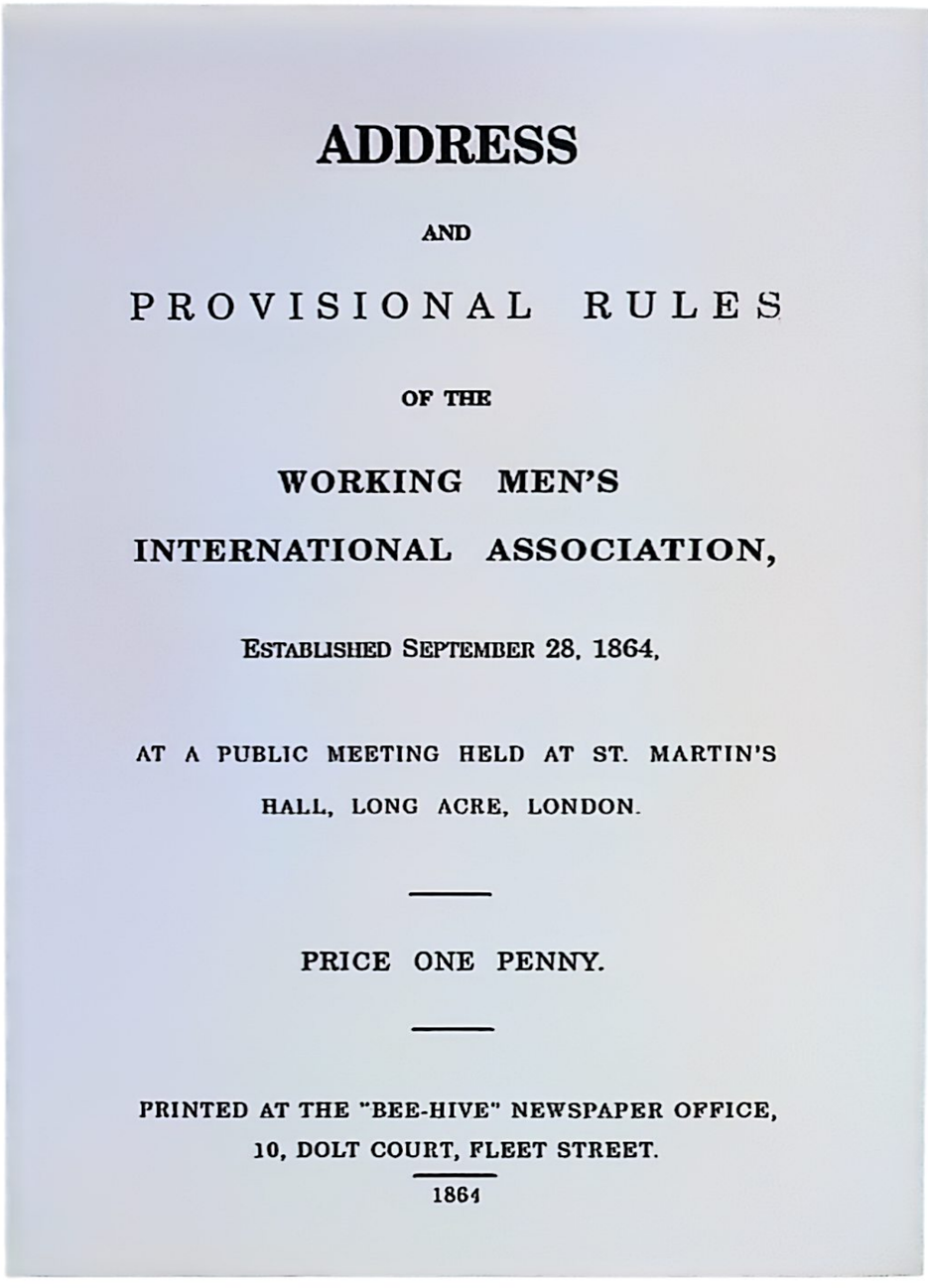
The first Meeting of the Committee elected at the Public Meeting held at St Martins Hall on the 28th of September 1864 was held at 18 Greek St Soho on October 5th 1864 and on the motion of Mr Weston seconded by Mr Whitlock Odger was voted to the Chair
The Chairman said the first business was the appointment of a Secretary to the Committee when Mr Shaw Lefevre and Mr Whitlock suggested that Mr Cremer be appointed. Mr Cremer would prefer the appointment of Mr Le Lubez who was he believed in every way qualified to fill the Office as Mr Lubez having for Private reason declined the office Mr Cremer was unanimously elected.
The next Question discussed was the Heading and Title of the Committee when several resolutions and

Minutes of the first meeting of the IWA General Council

Friedrich Lessner.

Robert Applegarth.

Karl Marx in 1861



ADDRESS

AND

PROVISIONAL RULES

OF THE

WORKING MEN'S

INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION,

ESTABLISHED SEPTEMBER 28, 1864,

AT A PUBLIC MEETING HELD AT ST. MARTIN'S HALL, LONG ACRE, LONDON.

PRICE ONE PENNY.

PRINTED AT THE "BEE-HIVE" NEWSPAPER OFFICE, 10, DOLT COURT, FLEET STREET.

1864

Title page of the First Address and Provisional Rules of the IWA, written by Marx in October 1864.

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Karl Marx, Inaugural Address of the International Working Men's Association

The "Inaugural Address of the IWA" was written by Marx between 21 and 27 October 1864, and was first published in "The Bee-Hive" on 5 November, together with a pamphlet edition entitled "Address and Provisional Rules of the Working Men's International Association". Marx's translation of this was published in German in Nos. 2 and 3 of the "Sozial-Demokrat" (21 and 30 December 1864). We publish its crucial passages.

Workingmen:

It is a great fact that the misery of the working masses has not diminished from 1848 to 1864, and yet this period is unrivalled for the development of its industry and the growth of its commerce. In 1850 a moderate organ of the British middle class, of more than average information, predicted that if the exports and imports of England were to rise 50 per cent, English pauperism would sink to zero. Alas! On April 7, 1864, the Chancellor of the Exchequer delighted his parliamentary audience by the statement that the total import and export of England had grown in 1863 *«to 443,955,000 pounds! That astonishing sum about three timesthe trade of the comparatively recent epoch of 1843!»* With all that, he was eloquent upon "poverty". *«Think,»* he exclaimed, *«of those who are on the border of that region,»* upon *«wages[...] not increased»*; upon *«human life[...] in nine cases out of ten but a struggle of existence!»* He did not speak of the people of Ireland, gradually replaced by machinery in the north and by sheepwalks in the south, though even the sheep in that unhappy country are decreasing, it is true, not at so rapid a rate as the men. He did not repeat what then had been just betrayed by the highest representation of the upper ten thousand in a sudden fit of terror. When garrotte panic had reached a certain height the House of Lords caused an inquiry to be

made into, and a report to be published upon, transportation and penal servitude. Out came the murder in the bulky Blue Book of 1863 and proved it was, by official facts and figures, that the worst of the convicted criminals, the penal serfs of England and Scotland, toiled much less and fared far better than the agricultural labourers of England and Scotland. But this was not all. When, consequent upon the Civil War in America, the operatives of Lancashire and Cheshire were thrown upon the streets, the same House of Lords sent to the manufacturing districts a physician commissioned to investigate into the smallest possible amount of carbon and nitrogen, to be administered in the cheapest and plainest form, which on an average might just suffice to "avert starvation diseases". Dr. Smith, the medical deputy, ascertained that 28,000 grains of carbon and 1,330 grains of nitrogen were the weekly allowance that would keep an average adult[...] just over the level of starvation diseases, and he found furthermore that quantity pretty nearly to agree with the scanty nourishment to which the pressure of extreme distress had actually reduced the cotton operatives.* But now mark! The same learned doctor was later on again deputed by the medical officer of the Privy Council to enquire into the nourishment of the poorer labouring classes. The results of his research are embodied in the "Sixth Report on Public Health", published by order of Parliament in the course of the present year. What did the doctor discover? That the silk weavers, the needlewomen, the kid glovers, the stock weavers, and so forth, received on an average, not even the distress pittance of the cotton operatives, not even the amount of carbon and nitrogen "just sufficient to avert starvation diseases".

> *«Moreover:—we quote from the report—«as regards the examined families of the agricultural population, it appeared that more than a fifth were with less than the estimated sufficiency of carbonaceous food, that more than one-third were with less than the estimated sufficiency of nitrogeneous food, and that in three counties (Berkshire, Oxfordshire, and Somersetshire) insufficiency of nitrogeneous food was the average diet.»*

> *«It must be remembered,»* adds the official report, *«that privation of food is very reluctantly borne, and that, as a rule, great poorness of diet will only come when other privations have preceded it[...]. Even cleanliness will have been found costly or difficult, and if there still be self-respectful endeavours to maintain it, every such endeavour will represent additional pangs of hunger.»*

> *«These are painful reflections, especially when it is remembered that the poverty to which they advert is not the deserved poverty of idleness; in all cases it is the poverty of working populations. Indeed the work which obtains the scanty pittance of food is for the most part excessively prolonged.»*

The report brings out the strange and rather unexpected fact:

«That of the division of the United Kingdom,» England, Wales, Scotland, and Ireland, *«the agricultural population of England,»* the richest division, *«is considerably the worst fed»*; but that even the agricultural labourers of Berkshire, Oxfordshire, and Somersetshire fare better than great numbers of skilled indoor operatives of the East of London.

Such are the official statements published by order of Parliament in 1864, during the millennium of free trade, at a time when the Chancellor of the Exchequer told the House of Commons that

> *«the average condition of the British labourer has improved in a degree we know to be extraordinary and unexampled in the history of any country or any age.»*

Upon these official congratulations jars the dry remark of the official Public Health Report:

> *«The public health of a country means the health of its masses, and the masses will scarcely be healthy unless, to their very base, they be at least moderately prosperous.»*

Dazzled by the "Progress of the Nation" statistics dancing before his eyes, the Chancellor of the Exchequer exclaims in wild ecstasy:

> *«From 1842 to 1852, the taxable income of the country increased by 6 per cent; in the eight years from 1853 to 1861, it has increased from the basis taken in 1853, 20 per cent! The fact is so astonishing to be almost incredible! [...] This intoxicating augmentation of wealth and power," adds Mr. Gladstone, "is entirely confined to classes of property.»*

If you want to know under what conditions of broken health, tainted morals, and mental ruin that *«intoxicating augmentation of wealth and power[...] entirely confined to classes of property»* was, and is, being produced by the classes of labour, look to the picture hung up in the last Public Health Report of the workshops of tailors, printers, and dressmakers! Compare the *"Report of the Children's Employment Commission"* of 1863, where it states, for instance, that *«the potters as a class, both men and women, represent a much degenerated population, both physically and mentally»*, that *«the unhealthy child is an unhealthy parent in his turn»*, that *«a progressive deterioration of the race must go on»*, and that *«the degenerescence of the population of Staffordshire would be even greater were it not for the constant recruiting from the adjacent country, and the intermarriage with more healthy races.»*

* We need hardly remind the reader that, apart from the elements of water and certain inorganic substances, carbon and nitrogen form the raw materials of human food. However, to nourish the human system, these simple chemical constituents must be supplied in the form of vegetable or animal substances. Potatoes, for instance, contain mainly carbon, while wheaten bread contains carbonaceous and nitrogenous substances in a due proportion. — K.M.

Glance at Mr. Tremenheere's Blue Book of the "Grievances Complained of by the Journeymen Bakers"! And who has not shuddered at the paradox, made by the inspectors of factories, and illustrated by the Registrar General, that the Lancashire operatives, while put upon the distress pittance of food, were actually improving in health, because of their temporary exclusion by the cotton famine from the cotton factory, and the mortality of the children was decreasing, because their mothers were now at last allowed to give them, instead of Godrey's cordial, their own breasts. Again, reverse the medal! The income and property tax returns laid before the House of Commons on July 20, 1864, teach us that the persons with yearly incomes valued by the tax gatherer of 50,000 pounds and upwards had, from April 5, 1862, to April 5, 1863, been joined by a dozen and one, their number having increased in that single year from 67 to 80. The same returns disclose the fact that about 3,000 persons divide among themselves a yearly income of about 25,000,000 pounds sterling, rather more than the total revenue doled out annually to the whole mass of the agricultural labourers of England and Wales. Open the census of 1861 and you will find that the number of male landed proprietors of England and Wales has decreased from 16,934 in 1851 to 15,066 in 1861, so that the concentration of land had grown in 10 years 11 per cent. If the concentration of the soil of the country in a few hands proceeds at the same rate, the land question will become singularly simplified, as it had become in the Roman Empire when Nero grinned at the discovery that half of the province of Africa was owned by six gentlemen.

We have dwelt so long upon these *«facts so astonishing as to be almost incredible»,* because England heads the Europe of commerce and industry. It will be remembered that some months ago one of the refugee sons of Louis Philippe publicly congratulated the English agricultural labourer on the superiority of his lot over that of his less florid comrade on the other side of the Channel. Indeed, with local colours changed, and on a scale somewhat contracted, the English facts reproduce themselves in all the industrious and progressive countries of the Continent. In all of them there has taken place, since 1848, an unheard-of development of industry, and an unheard-of expansion of imports and exports. In all of them "the augmentation of wealth and power entirely confined to classes of property" was truly "intoxicating".

In all of them, as in England, a minority of the working classes got their real wages somewhat advanced; while in most cases the monetary rise of wages denoted no more a real access of comforts than the inmate of the metropolitan poorhouse or orphan asylum, for instance, was in the least benefited by his first necessaries costing £9 15s. 8d. in 1861 against £7 7s. 4d. in 1852. Everywhere the great mass of the working classes were sinking down to a lower depth, at the same rate at least that those

above them were rising in the social scale. In all countries of Europe it has now become a truth demonstrable to every unprejudiced mind, and only decried by those whose interest it is to hedge other people in a fool's paradise, that no improvement of machinery, no appliance of science to production, no contrivances of communication, no new colonies, no emigration, no opening of markets, no free trade, not all these things put together, will do away with the miseries of the industrious masses; but that, on the present false base, every fresh development of the productive powers of labour must tend to deepen social contrasts and point social antagonisms. Death of starvation rose almost to the rank of an institution, during this intoxicating epoch of economical progress, in the metropolis of the British empire. That epoch is marked in the annals of the world by the quickened return, the widening compass, and the deadlier effects of the social pest called a commercial and industrial crisis.

After the failure of the Revolution of 1848, all party organisations and party journals of the working classes were, on the Continent, crushed by the iron hand of force, the most advanced sons of labour fled in despair to the transatlantic republic, and the short-lived dreams of emancipation vanished before an epoch of industrial fever, moral marasm, and political reaction. The defeat of the continental working classes, partly owed to the diplomacy of the English government, acting then as now in fraternal solidarity with the Cabinet of St. Petersburg, soon spread its contagious effects to this side of the Channel. While the rout of their continental brethren unmanned the English working classes, and broke their faith in their own cause, it restored to the landlord and the money lord their somewhat shaken confidence. They insolently withdrew concessions already advertised. The discoveries of new gold lands led to an immense exodus, leaving an irreparable void in the ranks of the British proletariat. Others of its formerly active members were caught by the temporary bribe of greater work and wages, and turned into "political blacks". All the efforts made at keeping up, of remodelling, the Chartist movement failed signally; the press organs of the working class died one by one of the apathy of the masses, and in point of fact never before seemed the English working class so thoroughly reconciled to a state of political nullity. If, then, there had been no solidarity of action between the British and the continental working classes, there was, at all events, a solidarity of defeat.

And yet the period passed since the Revolutions of 1848 has not been without its compensating features. We shall here only point to two great factors.

After a 30 years' struggle, fought with almost admirable perseverance, the English working classes, improving a momentaneous split between the landlords and money lords, succeeded in carrying the Ten Hours'

Bill. The immense physical, moral, and intellectual benefits hence accruing to the factory operatives, half-yearly chronicled in the reports of the inspectors of factories, are now acknowledged on all sides. Most of the continental governments had to accept the English Factory Act in more or less modified forms, and the English Parliament itself is every year compelled to enlarge its sphere of action. But besides its practical import, there was something else to exalt the marvellous success of this workingmen's measure. Through their most notorious organs of science, such as Dr. Ure, Professor Senior, and other sages of that stamp, the middle class had predicted, and to their heart's content proved, that any legal restriction of the hours of labour must sound the death knell of British industry, which, vampirelike, could but live by sucking blood, and children's blood, too. In olden times, child murder was a mysterious rite of the religion of Moloch, but it was practised on some very solemn occasions only, once a year perhaps, and then Moloch had no exclusive bias for the children of the poor. This struggle about the legal restriction of the hours of labour raged the more fiercely since, apart from frightened avarice, it told indeed upon the great contest between the blind rule of the supply and demand laws which form the political economy of the middle class, and social production controlled by social foresight, which forms the political economy of the working class. Hence the Ten Hours' Bill was not only a great practical success; it was the victory of a principle; it was the first time that in broad daylight the political economy of the middle class succumbed to the political economy of the working class.

But there was in store a still greater victory of the political economy of labour over the political economy of property. We speak of the co-operative movement, especially the co-operative factories raised by the unassisted efforts of a few bold "hands". The value of these great social experiments cannot be overrated. By deed instead of by argument, they have shown that production on a large scale, and in accord with the behests of modern science, may be carried on without the existence of a class of masters employing a class of hands; that to bear fruit, the means of labour need not be monopolised as a means of dominion over, and of extortion against, the labouring man himself; and that, like slave labour, like serf labour, hired labour is but a transitory and inferior form, destined to disappear before associated labour plying its toil with a willing hand, a ready mind, and a joyous heart. In England, the seeds of the co-operative system were sown by Robert Owen; the workingmen's experiments tried on the Continent were, in fact, the practical upshot of the theories, not invented, but loudly proclaimed, in 1848.

At the same time the experience of the period from 1848 to 1864 has proved beyond doubt that, however excellent in principle and however useful in practice, co-operative labour, if kept within the narrow circle

of the casual efforts of private workmen, will never be able to arrest the growth in geometrical progression of monopoly, to free the masses, nor even to perceptibly lighten the burden of their miseries. It is perhaps for this very reason that plausible noblemen, philanthropic middle-class spouters, and even keen political economists have all at once turned nauseously complimentary to the very co-operative labour system they had vainly tried to nip in the bud by deriding it as the utopia of the dreamer, or stigmatising it as the sacrilege of the socialist. To save the industrious masses, co-operative labour ought to be developed to national dimensions, and, consequently, to be fostered by national means. Yet the lords of the land and the lords of capital will always use their political privileges for the defence and perpetuation of their economic monopolies. So far from promoting, they will continue to lay every possible impediment in the way of the emancipation of labour. Remember the sneer with which, last session, Lord Palmerston put down the advocates of the Irish Tenants' Right Bill. The House of Commons, cried he, is a house of landed proprietors. To conquer political power has, therefore, become the great duty of the working classes. They seem to have comprehended this, for in England, Germany, Italy, and France, there have taken place simultaneous revivals, and simultaneous efforts are being made at the political organisation of the workingmen's party.

One element of success they possess — numbers; but numbers weigh in the balance only if united by combination and led by knowledge. Past experience has shown how disregard of that bond of brotherhood which ought to exist between the workmen of different countries and incite them to stand firmly by each other in all their struggles for emancipation, will be chastised by the common discomfiture of their incoherent efforts. This thought prompted the workingmen of different countries assembled on September 28, 1864, in public meeting at St. Martin's Hall, to found the International Association.

Another conviction swayed that meeting. If the emancipation of the working classes requires their fraternal concurrence, how are they to fulfil that great mission with a foreign policy in pursuit of criminal designs, playing upon national prejudices, and squandering in piratical wars the people's blood and treasure? It was not the wisdom of the ruling classes, but the heroic resistance to their criminal folly by the working classes of England, that saved the west of Europe from plunging headlong into an infamous crusade for the perpetuation and propagation of slavery on the other side of the Atlantic. The shameless approval, mock sympathy, or idiotic indifference with which the upper classes of Europe have witnessed the mountain fortress of the Caucasus falling a prey to, and heroic Poland being assassinated by, Russia: the immense and unresisted encroachments of that barbarous power,

whose head is in St. Petersburg, and whose hands are in every cabinet of Europe, have taught the working classes the duty to master themselves the mysteries of international politics; to watch the diplomatic acts of their respective governments; to counteract them, if necessary, by all means in their power; when unable to prevent, to combine in simultaneous denunciations, and to vindicate the simple laws or morals and justice, which ought to govern the relations of private individuals, as the rules paramount of the intercourse of nations.

The fight for such a foreign policy forms part of the general struggle for the emancipation of the working classes.

Proletarians of all countries, unite!

Marx laid the foundations of a precise programme for the future action of the International in this work. He deduced from the development of capitalism in England the class relationships that were destined to become the norm and highlighted the English workers' struggles for a reduction in working hours; he then evaluated the co-operative movement and underlined its limitations; finally, he highlighted the need for organisation and the workers' duty to *«master themselves the mysteries of international politics»*.

At a certain point, Marx went further and indicated the future prospects: *«To conquer political power has, therefore, become the great duty of the working classes. They seem to have comprehended this, for in England, Germany, Italy, and France, there have taken place simultaneous revivals, and simultaneous efforts are being made at the political organisation of the workingmen's party.»*

The Paris Commune was the most recent confirmation of this: *«It was essentially a working class government, the product of the struggle of the producing against the appropriating class, the political form at last discovered under which to work out the economical emancipation of labour»*, he would write in his 30 May 1871 address to the General Council of the International.

APPENDIX

Marx and Engels' Letters on the Birth of the International Working Men's Association

The role played by Marx in the first year of the IWA's life is illustrated by a number of passages from his correspondence with Engels, Joseph Weydemeyer and Ludwig Kugelmann. They seem to confirm David Rjazanov's judgement (which emerges from his research) on the revival of the workers' movement in France and England, even though it was weighed down by heavy limitations. Let's see what Marx tells Engels in his letter dated 4 November 1864, part of which has already been quoted in the previous pages.

Marx to Engels
in Manchester
London, 4 November 1864

Dear FREDERICK,

[...] Some time ago, London workers sent an address to workers in Paris about Poland and called upon them to act jointly in the matter.
For their part, the Parisians sent over a deputation headed by a worker named *Tolain,* who was the *real workers' candidate in the last elections in Paris,* a thoroughly nice fellow. (His *compagnons* were quite nice lads, too.) A PUBLIC MEETING in St Martin's Hall was called, for 28 September 1864, by Odger (shoemaker, President of the local COUNCIL OF ALL LONDON TRADES' UNIONS and, in particular, also of the TRADES' UNIONS SUFFRAGE AGITATION SOCIETY, which is connected with Bright) and Cremer, a MASON and secretary of the MASONS' UNION.
(These two had arranged the big TRADE-UNION MEETING on North America chaired by Bright in St James's Hall, ditto the Garibaldi manifestations.) A certain *Le Lubez* was sent to ask me if I would participate *pour*

les ouvriers allemands, and, in particular, whether I was willing to provide a German worker to speak at the MEETING, etc. I provided them with Eccarius, who put on a splendid performance, and I was also present myself in a non-speaking capacity on the PLATFORM. I knew that on this occasion 'people who really count' were appearing, both from London and from Paris, and I therefore decided to waive my usual standing rule to DECLINE ANY SUCH INVITATIONS.

(Le Lubez is a young Frenchman, i.e. in his thirties; however, he grew up in Jersey and London, speaks capital English and is a very good intermediary between the French and English workers.) (Music teacher and *leçons* OF FRENCH.)

At the MEETING, which was *chock-full* (for THERE IS NOW EVIDENTLY A REVIVAL OF THE WORKING CLASSES TAKING PLACE), Major Wolff (Thum-Taxis, Garibaldi's adjutant) represented THE LONDON *ITALIAN* WORKINGMEN'S SOCIETY. It was resolved to found a 'WORKINGMEN'S INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION', whose GENERAL COUNCIL is to have its seat in London and is to 'intermediate' between the workers' SOCIETIES in Germany, Italy, France, and England. Ditto that a General WORKINGMEN'S CONGRESS was to be convened in Belgium in 1865. A PROVISIONAL COMMITTEE was set up at the MEETING, with Odger, Cremer and many others, some of them former Chartists, former Owenites, etc., representing England, Major Wolff, Fontana, and other Italians representing Italy, Le Lubez, etc. for France, Eccarius and myself for Germany. The COMMITTEE was empowered to co-opt as many people as it chose.

SO FAR SO GOOD. I attended the first meeting of the committee. A *Sub-Committee* (including myself) was set up to draft a *déclaration des principes* and provisional rules. Indisposition prevented me from attending the meeting of the Sub-Committee and the subsequent meeting of the full committee.

At these two meetings, which I did not attend,—that of the Sub-Committee and the subsequent one of the full committee—the following occurred: Major *Wolff* had submitted the regulations (statutes) of the *Italian Workers' Associations* (which possess a central organisation, but, as emerged later, are essentially associated BENEFIT SOCIETIES) to be used by the new Association. I saw the stuff later. It was EVIDENTLY a concoction of *Mazzini's,* and that tells you in advance in what spirit and phraseology the real question, the labour question, was dealt with. As well as how the NATIONALITIES question intruded into it.

What is more, an old Owenite, Weston—now a MANUFACTURER himself, a very amiable and worthy man—had drawn up a programme full of extreme confusion and of indescribable breadth.

The subsequent full committee meeting instructed the Sub-Committee to remodel Weston's programme, ditto Wolff's REGULATIONS. Wolff himself

left to attend the congress of the ITALIAN WORKINGMEN'S ASSOCIATIONS in Naples and persuade them to join the central association in London.

A further meeting of the Sub-Committee, which again I did not attend, as I was informed of their rendezvous too late. At this meeting, *'une déclaration des principes'* and a revised version of Wolff's rules were presented by Le Lubez and accepted by the Sub-Committee for submission to the full committee. The full committee met on 18 October. Eccarius wrote to me that it was a case of *periculum in mora,* so I went along and was really shocked when I heard the worthy Le Lubez read out a fearfully cliché-ridden, badly written and totally unpolished preamble PRETENDING TO BE A DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES, with Mazzini showing through the whole thing from beneath a crust of the most insubstantial scraps of French socialism. What is more, the Italian rules had by and large been adopted, whose aim, apart from all their other faults, was really something quite impossible, a sort of central government of the *European* working classes (with Mazzini in the background, of course). I remonstrated mildly, and, after prolonged debate, Eccarius proposed that the Sub-Committee should subject the thing to further 'editing'. However, the 'SENTIMENTS' expressed in Lubez' DECLARATION were carried.

Two days later, on 20 October, Cremer representing England, Fontana (Italy) and Le Lubez met at my house. (Weston was unable to be present.) I had not previously had the papers (Wolff's and Le Lubez') in my hands, so could not prepare anything; but I was absolutely determined that NOT ONE SINGLE LINE of the stuff should be allowed to stand if I could help it. To gain time, I proposed that before we 'edited' the preamble, we ought to 'discuss' the RULES.

This was done. It was 1 o'clock in the morning before the first of the 40 RULES was adopted. Cremer said *(and that was my whole aim):* we have nothing to put before the committee that is to meet on 25 October. We must postpone it until 1 November. But the Sub-Committee can meet on 27 October and attempt to reach a definite conclusion. This was agreed and the 'papers' were 'bequeathed' to me for my perusal.

I could see it was impossible to make anything out of the stuff.

In order to justify the extremely peculiar way in which I intended to edit the SENTIMENTS that had already been 'carried', I wrote AN ADDRESS TO THE WORKING CLASSES (which was not in the original plan; A SORT OF REVIEW OF THE ADVENTURES OF THE WORKING CLASSES SINCE 1846). On the pretext that all the necessary facts were contained in this 'Address' and that we ought not to repeat the same things three times over, I altered the whole preamble, threw out the *déclaration des principes* and finally replaced the 40 RULES by 10. Insofar as INTERNATIONAL POLITICS is mentioned in the 'Address', I refer to COUNTRIES and not to NATIONALITIES, and denounce Russia, not the *minores gentium.*

The Sub-Committee adopted all my proposals. I was, however, obliged to insert two sentences about 'DUTY' and 'RIGHT', and ditto about 'TRUTH, MORALITY AND JUSTICE' in the preamble to the rules but these are so placed that they can do no harm.
At the meeting of the General Committee my 'ADDRESS', etc., was adopted with great enthusiasm (UNANIMOUSLY). The debate on the form of publication, etc., is to take place next Tuesday. Le Lubez has a copy of the 'Address' for translation into French and Fontana one for translation into Italian. (For a start there is a weekly CALLED *Bee-Hive*, edited by Trade Unionist Potter, a sort of *Moniteur.)* I am to translate the stuff into German myself.
It was very difficult to frame the thing so that our view should appear in a form that would make it ACCEPTABLE to the present outlook of the workers' movement. In a couple of weeks, the same people will be having MEETINGS on the franchise with Bright and Cobden. It will take time before the revival of the movement allows the old boldness of language to be used. We must be *fortiter in re, suaviter in modo.* You will get the stuff as soon as it is printed.

[Marx goes on to tell of an interesting opinion expressed by Bakunin about the Polish uprising against Russia.] *Bakunin* sends his regards. He left today for Italy where he is living (Florence). I saw him yesterday for the first time in 16 years.
I must say I liked him very much, more so than previously. With regard to the Polish movement, he said the Russian government had needed the movement to keep Russia itself quiet, but had not counted on anything like an 18-month struggle. They had thus provoked the affair in Poland. Poland had been defeated by two things, the influence of Bonaparte and, secondly, the hesitation of the Polish aristocracy in openly and unambiguously proclaiming *peasant socialism* from the outset. From now on—after the collapse of the Polish affair—he (Bakunin) will only involve himself in the socialist movement.
On the whole, he is one of the few people whom after 16 years I find to have moved forwards and not backwards. I also discussed Urquhart's DENUNCIATIONS with him. (Apropos: the International Association will probably lead to a rupture between myself and these friends!) He inquired a great deal after yourself and Lupus. When I told him of the latter's death, he said straightaway that the movement had suffered an irreplaceable loss.
[In conclusion, an evaluation of the economic crisis.] By no means burnt out on the Continent yet (esp. France). Incidentally, what the crises have lost in intensity, they have now gained in frequency.

Salut. Your K. M.

Engels' letter of 24 November 1864 to Joseph Weydemeyer, who was in North America at the time of the war against the Confederate States of the South. His evaluations of the international scenario make it very interesting.

Engels to Joseph Weydemeyer
in St Louis
Manchester, 24 November 1864

Dear Weydemeyer,

[...] Nothing of much interest is happening here in Europe. The suppression of the Polish uprising was the last decisive event; for his assistance in this, the Tsar gave Bismarck permission to take Schleswig-Holstein from the Danes. It will be a long time before Poland is capable of rising again, even with help from outside, and yet Poland is quite indispensable to us. The despicable behaviour of the liberal German philistines is to blame; if those curs in the Prussian Chamber had had more insight and courage, all might be well—Austria was ready to march in support of the Poles at any time, and it was only Prussia's attitude that prevented it, and the treachery of Mr Bonaparte, who was, of course, only prepared to keep his promises to the Poles if he could do so safely, i.e. if he was covered by Prussia and Austria.
That war of yours over there is really one of the most stupendous things that one can experience. Despite the numerous blunders made by the Northern armies (enough by the South, too), the tide of conquest is rolling slowly but surely onward, and, in the course of 1865, at all events the moment will undoubtedly come when the organised resistance of the South will fold up like a pocket-knife, and the warfare turn into banditry, as in the Carlist war in Spain and more recently in Naples. A people's war of this kind, on both sides, has not taken place since great states have been in existence, and it will, at all events, point the direction for the future of the whole of America for hundreds of years to come.
Once slavery, the greatest shackle on the political and social development of the United States, has been broken, the country is bound to receive an impetus from which it will acquire quite a different position in world history within the shortest possible time, and a use will then soon be found for the army and navy with which the war is providing it. [...]

Kindest regards to your wife. Your F. Engels

A few days later, on 29 November 1864, Marx also wrote to Joseph Weydemeyer. His letter repeats his evaluation of the IWA founders and of the pro-Northern American States movement in England.

Marx to Joseph Weydemeyer
in St Louis
London, 29 November 1864
1 Modena Villas, Maitland Park,
Haverstock Hill,
N. W.

Dear Weiwi,

[...]I am, at the same time, sending you by mail 4 copies of a printed 'Address', of which I am the author. The newly established INTERNATIONAL Workers' Committee, in whose name it has been put out, is not without significance. Its *English* members consist chiefly of the heads of the TRADE-UNIONS here, in other words, the real worker-kings of London, the same people who organised that gigantic reception for Garibaldi and who, by that monster meeting in St James's Hall (under Bright's chairmanship), prevented Palmerston declaring *war on the United States,* which he was on the point of doing. On the French side, the members are unimportant figures, but they are the direct spokesmen of the leading 'workers' in Paris. There is likewise a link with the Italian associations, which recently held their congress in Naples.
Although I have been systematically refusing to participate in any way whatsoever in all the 'organisations', etc. for years now, I accepted *this time* because it concerns a matter by means of which it is possible to have a significant influence. [...]

Your K. Marx

Still on 29 November 1864, Marx wrote a letter to Ludwig Kugelmann in Hanover. Almost in the same words, we find in it the repetition of his evaluation of the birth of the IWA, already expressed to Weydemeyer. We also find the announcement of the forthcoming publication of "Capital", the first volume of which will actually

be published in 1867 by Meissner in Hamburg. While he devoted himself to political action and the First International, Marx had never ceased to work on his theoretical work, the base of his strategy. Without this analytical work, there would not have been the deep understanding of capitalist accumulation, of the concentration of production and workers, or of the very role the proletariat was called upon to play in the class struggle. It is important to remember this, since it will make his evaluation of the IWA and his choice to return to the practical struggle as its leader seem even more praiseworthy and valid.

MARX TO KUGELMANN
IN HANOVER
London, 29 November 1864
1 Modena Villas, Maitland Park,
Haverstock Hill,
N. W.

Dear Friend,

Today you will receive from me by post 6 copies of the 'ADDRESS OF THE WORKINGMEN'S INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION' of which I am the author. Please be so good as to convey a copy with my kindest regards to Madame Markheim (Fulda). Give one to Mr Miquel as well.
The Association—or rather its Committee—is important because the leaders of the London TRADE-UNIONS belong to it, the same people who organised that enormous reception for Garibaldi and thwarted Palmerston's plan for a war with the United States by means of the monster meeting in St James's Hall. The leaders of the Parisian workers are also in contact with it. [...]
I think that my book on capital (60 sheets) will at last be ready for the press next year. [...]
I hope to hear from you soon.

Yours very respectfully K. Marx.

Marx's letter to his uncle Lion Philips, always dated 29 November 1864, finally gives us a summing up of the considerations made so far.

Marx to Lion Philips
in Zalt-Bommel
London, 29 November 1864
1 Modena Villas, Maitland Park,
Haverstock Hill
N. W.

Dear Uncle,

The trade crisis, which I predicted to you long before its actual arrival, has by this time long since lost its edge, although its consequences in the manufacturing districts proper are still very considerable. On the other hand, I believe a political crisis is to be expected in the spring or early summer. Bonaparte has again reached the point where he will have to make war again if he is to raise a loan. The Venetian business is being kept open (I am acquainted with some of the agents there) so that it can provide a point of contact if need be. It is possible that Bonaparte will again find a way out, and then he will keep the peace (for he is no REAL Napoleon), but that is rather improbable.
The enclosed printed 'Address" is written by myself. The matter hangs together like this: in September the Parisian workers sent a delegation to the London workers to demonstrate support for Poland. On that occasion, an international Workers' Committee was formed. The matter is not without importance because 1. in London the same people are at the head who organised the gigantic reception for Garibaldi and, by their monster meeting with Bright in St James's Hall, *prevented war with the United States.* In a word, these are the real workers' leaders in London, with one or two exceptions all workers themselves. 2. On the Parisian side, Mr Tolain *(ouvrier* himself, as well) *et* Co. are at the head, i.e., the same people who were prevented by a mere intrigue on the part of Garnier-Pagès, Carnot, etc., from entering the Corps legislative at the last elections in Paris as representatives of the workers there, and 3. on the Italian side, it has been joined by the representatives of the 4-500 Italian workers' clubs which held their general congress in Naples some weeks ago, an event which even *The Times* considered important enough to merit a few dozen lines in the paper.
Courtesy toward the French and the Italians, who always require florid language, has obliged me to include a few superfluous turns of phrase in

the preamble to the 'Rules', though not in the 'Address'. A few days ago I received a letter from America from my friend Weydemeyer, Colonel in the regiment stationed at St Louis (Missouri). [...]
When you reflect, my dear Uncle, how at the time of Lincoln's election 3½ years ago it was only a matter of making *no further concessions* to the slave-owners, whereas now the avowed aim, which has in part already been realised, is the *abolition of slavery,* one has to admit that *never* has such a gigantic revolution occurred with such rapidity. It will have a highly beneficial influence on the whole world. [...]

Ever your faithful nephew K. M.

At the end of 1864, Marx is by now fully immersed in his work for the IWA and two letters to Engels (10 December and the following 25 January) show us moments of this work. In the first, we see Marx's analytical fervour as he fights mistaken or ambiguous formulas. The case of the relations between France and the Polish revolutionary movement is exemplary.

Marx to Engels
in Manchester
London, 10 December 1864

DEAR FRED,

[...] Today's *The Miner and Workman's Advocate*—the *Moniteur* of the mine-workers in England and Wales—is printing the whole of my 'Address'. The London 'BRICKLAYERS' (over 3,000 men) have announced they are joining the International Association, and they are fellows who have *never* before joined a MOVEMENT.
There was a *SUB-COMMITTEE* meeting last Tuesday, at which Mr Peter Fox (his real name is P. Fox André) presented his address on Poland to us. (This kind of thing is always dealt with beforehand in the SUB-COMMITTEE before going to the GENERAL COMMITTEE.) The piece is not badly written and Fox has endeavoured to apply the concept of 'class', at least a semblance of it, although it is normally alien to him. His real forte is FOREIGN POLICY, and it is only as a propagandist of atheism that he has had dealings with the WORKING CLASSES AS SUCH.
But easy though it is to get the English workers to accept a rational approach, one has to be all the more careful the moment men of letters, members of

the bourgeoisie or semi-literary people become involved in the movement. Fox, like his friend Beesly (Professor of Political Economy at the University of London, he took the chair at the founding MEETING in St Martin's Hall) and other 'DEMOCRATS', have a fanatical 'love' of France, which, as far as *FOREIGN POLICY* is concerned, they extend not only to Napoleon I but even to Boustrapa*, as opposed to what they call, not without justice, the English aristocratic tradition, and as a continuation of what they call the English democratic tradition of 1791/92. WELL!
Not content in his address (which, incidentally, is not to appear as an address from the whole Association but as an address from the *English* section concerning the POLISH QUESTION, *endorsed* by the whole Committee) with telling the Poles, which is true, that the French people has been traditionally more sympathetic towards them than the English, Mr Fox WINDS UP HIS ADDRESS mainly by consoling the Poles with the passionate friendship that THE ENGLISH WORKING CLASSES have conceived FOR THE FRENCH DEMOCRATS. I opposed this and unfolded a historically irrefutable tableau of the constant French betrayal of Poland from Louis XV to Bonaparte III. At the same time, I pointed out how thoroughly *inappropriate* it was that the *ANGLO-FRENCH-ALLIANCE* should appear as the 'core' of the *INTERNATIONAL* ASSOCIATION, albeit in a democratic version. To cut matters short, Fox's address was accepted by the SUB-COMMITTEE on condition that he altered the *'TAIL'* in accordance with my suggestions. Jung, the Swiss SECRETARY (from French Switzerland), declared that, as a *MINORITY* on the GENERAL COUNCIL, he would move that the address be rejected as ALTOGETHER 'bourgeois'. [...]

Salut. Your K. M.

Marx's second letter to Engels, dated 25 January 1865.

Marx to Engels
in Manchester
London, 25 January 1865

DEAR FREDERICK,

The Association is doing famously here. At its soirée which I did *not* attend, ABOUT 1,200 people (they would have had 3 x as many if the hall had been big enough) gathered, which brought approximately £15 into our exceedingly depleted EXCHEQUER.
Letter has come from Geneva about joining, and from DIFFERENT PARTS OF ENGLAND.

---

* Boustrapa: Napoleon III.

There will be a MEETING for the Poles in the course of February (especially to collect money for the *new* émigrés, which also explains *Lord* Townshend as CHAIRMAN), organised by the (English) POLISH LEAGUE, the *Polish* society here and our Association. [...]
Apropos. Each secretary of our Association will receive a package of *CARDS OF MEMBERSHIP* next week (for the 'Association', not for the *'Comité'*, of course) for distribution (Is. for annual subscription, Id. for the CARD). YOU must get rid of a few in Manchester. It will not be many. But let me know about HOW MANY I can send for this purpose? It is IN FACT ONE OF THE WAYS AND MEANS OF THE ASSOCIATION. [...]

YOURS TRULY K. M.

In the description of the origins of the IWA, so far it is the role of the workers and their organisations in France and England that has been highlighted, while of the workers' movement in Germany we have only had occasion to meet political exiles, especially those organised in the K.A.B. in London. The workers of the Germany of the time, still divided into small states, had their main organisation in the ADAV (General German Workers' Association), founded in May 1863 by Lassalle, who was killed in a duel the following year. Marx and Engels did not accept, and on various occasions harshly criticised in their correspondence, the choices of Lassalle and his followers in the struggles to unify the German market and in their support for Bismarck's state interventionism in Prussia. Precisely in 1864-1865, Engels in particular wrote "The Prussian Military Question and the German Workers' Party", a pamphlet in which he spoke out against "Lassallism" and pointed out the way to follow to the German workers. On 5 February 1865, he had written to Marx: *«In a predominantly agricultural country like Prussia it is despicable to attack only the bourgeoisie in the name of the industrial proletariat, without even mentioning the brutal patriarchal exploitation of the rural proletariat by the big feudal aristocracy.»* In Marx's 10 February 1865 letter to Engels, there is a return to these themes, together with other aspects of IWA activity.

Marx to Engels
in Manchester
London, 10 February 1865

Dear FREDERICK,

The thing* is good. Although the style is too slapdash in places, it would be NONSENSE to polish or elaborate it at all now, as the main thing is to get it out IN THE NICK OF TIME, as the conflict** is 'all ready' on the point of being resolved.
My advice therefore is this:
Send the pamphlet straight to *Meissner* in Hamburg and tell him that *speed of publication* is paramount; and he should let you know immediately whether he will take it (leaving him to decide the fee), because then you would attract attention to the thing in advance in the Berlin and Rhineland papers.
The thing is much too long and 'too cheeky' for the *Social-Demokrat* in present circumstances. But I would arrange for notices, short ones, in the *Social-Demokrat* (through Eccarius), in the *Düsseldorfer Zeitung* through Siebel, and maybe even send a notice to the *Rheinische Zeitung,* to the effect that a pamphlet by you is being published at such and such a place, in which you are simply setting out our position on this specific question, as opposed to that of the Reaction, men of Progress" and Lassalleans, along with treatment of the PURELY MILITARY QUESTION.
Even if there are still things you have got to add to it, send the manuscript IMMEDIATELY ad Meissnerem (Hamburg) all the same and tell him that a few additions are to follow relating to such-and-such page (you can mark the places). There should have been rather more mention of the *country people,* which your German lout is far too inclined to ignore as non-existent. [...]
To Moses' great distress, the 'INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION' is creating a great stir amongst the workers in Paris. As a result of Moses' gaffe, Tolain*** has stepped down. (We have *not* formally accepted his resignation.) *H. Lefort* (editor of the *Avenir,* etc.), who is also on the editorial committee of *L'Association,* has at his request been appointed LITERARY DEFENDER (ATTORNEY GENERAL) of *our* Association in Paris. The latter is already under attack from *Horn* [who declares himself against] a paragraph in the Rules). [...]

---

* Engels' pamphlet.

** The reference is to the debate on reforming the army in the Prussian Chamber of Deputies.

*** Moses had accused Tolain of "imperial socialism".

At the preparatory session for the Polish meeting, I also saw OLD Oborski again, who does *not* send his regards.

Salut. Your K. M.

Apropos. The fact that Lincoln answered us so courteously and the 'BOURGEOIS EMANCIPATION SOCIETY" so brusquely and purely formally made the *The Daily News* so indignant that they did *not* print the answer to us. However, since they saw, to their dismay, that *The Times* was doing so, they had to publish it *later* in *The Express. Levy* also had to eat humble pie. The difference between Lincoln's answer to us and to the bourgeoisie has created such a sensation here that the West End 'clubs' are shaking their heads at it. You can understand how gratifying that has been for our people.

In March 1865, Marx and Engels openly broke all links with the editorial staff of the "Sozial-Demokrat", the General German Workers' Association official organ, in which Lassalle's successor, Schweitzer, had published a series of articles openly in favour of Bismarck's policy. To this end, they sent a "declaration" that would be published in both the "Sozial-Demokrat" and other German newspapers. Meanwhile, the IWA continued to grow and on 4 March Marx wrote to Engels: *«The [French], particularly the Parisian workers (although already links with 25 other French cities, too) literally regard the London COUNCIL as a workers' government 'abroad'.»* On 13 March, Marx told Engels about how much time and effort was required of him. In particular, a dispute had broken out in the IWA Paris branch: Tolain and Limousin's leadership had been contested by Lefort and Le Lebuz. This conflict was further inflamed by Moses Hess's accusation that Tolain was the advocate of "imperial socialism". Marx sent Victor Schily to Paris as a moderator, with the task of preventing the Paris branch, mostly made up of workers, from breaking away from the IWA because of this conflict.

Marx to Engels
in Manchester
London, 13 March 1865

Dear Engels,

[...]Besides my work on the book*, the *INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION* takes up an enormous amount of time, as I am IN FACT the HEAD of it.
And what a waste of time! (And it would come just now, with the French business and the election business here, etc., all at the same time.) E.g. the French shit:
28 February. Tolain and Fribourg here from Paris. Meeting of the *CENTRAL COUNCIL,* where they state their case and bicker with Le Lubez until 12 o'clock at night. Then reconvene in Bolleter's tavern, where I had another 200 odd cards to sign. (I have now got them to change this stupid practice by having our handwriting engraved on the plate, and only the GENERAL SECRETARY signs by hand. Meanwhile, the remaining 1,000 cards OF THE OLD EDITION had to be signed IN THE OLD STYLE.)
1 March. Polish MEETING**.
4 March. SUB-COMMITTEE meeting about the French question until 1 o'clock in the morning.
6 March. SUB-COMMITTEE meeting about ditto until 1 o'clock in the morning.
7 March. SITTING OF THE CENTRAL COUNCIL until 12 o'clock at night. *Resolutions passed (I enclose resolutions,* along with the private instructions which the CENTRAL COUNCIL is sending to Schily, who, as you can see from resolution V, *has been appointed CENTRAL COUNCIL DELEGATE (AMBASSADOR) AT Paris.)* [...]
In between times, people *dashing this way and that* to see me in connection with the conference with Bright which was held last Saturday (11 March)***, etc. Reported briefly on same to Jones (he had enquired beforehand about it on Friday), instructed him to convey the letter to you.
WELL, *mon cher, que faire?* He who says 'A' must also say 'B'. [...]

Salut. Your K. M.

In May 1865, a debate took place within the IWA General Council about workers' wages and trade union industrial action: this

* "Capital".
** On the occasion of the anniversary of the Polish uprising.
*** On the question of extending the franchise to the whole of the male population.

gave Marx the opportunity to present a brief explanation of his studies for "Capital". The debate continued into the following month and on 20 and 27 June Marx held a conference on the subject, published by his daughter Eleanor in 1898 as "Wages, Price and Profit". On 20 May 1865, Marx wrote to Engels.

Marx to Engels
in Manchester
London, 20 MAY 1865

DEAR FRED,

[...] Special meeting of the 'INTERNATIONAL' this evening. A good old codger, an OLD OWENIST, *Weston* (CARPENTER), has put up the following two propositions that he is constantly defending in *The Bee-Hive:*
1. that A GENERAL RATE IN THE RISE OF THE RATE OF WAGES would be of no benefit to the workers;
2. that the TRADES-UNIONS for that reason, etc., are *harmful.*
If these two propositions, in which *he* alone in our SOCIETY believes, were to be accepted, we should be in a terrible mess, both in respect of the TRADES-UNIONS here and the INFECTION OF STRIKES now prevailing on the Continent.
He will be supported in the matter by a native Englishman— since non-members are also admitted to this meeting—who has written a pamphlet to the same effect. I am, of course, expected to produce a refutation. I ought therefore really to have worked out my *réplique* for this evening, but I thought it more important to get on with writing my book, and so I shall have to rely on improvisation.
I know in advance, of course, what the two main POINTS will be:
1. that *wages* determine the value of commodities;
2. that if the capitalists pay 5s. today instead of 4, tomorrow they will sell their commodities for 5s. instead of 4 (being ENABLED to do so by the increased demand).
Trite though that is, and however little it penetrates the topmost surface of things, it is, nevertheless, not easy to explain to the ignorant all the competing economic questions involved. YOU CAN'T COMPRESS A COURSE OF POLITICAL ECONOMY INTO 1 HOUR. BUT WE SHALL DO OUR BEST. [...]

Salut. Your K. M.

In conclusion, a letter from Marx to Ludwig Kugelmann, dated 15 January 1866, allows us to draw up a balance sheet of the IWA activities fifteen months after it first saw the light of day.

Marx to Ludwig Kugelmann
in Hanover
London, 15 January 1866
1 Modena Villas, Maitland Park,
Haverstock Hill

Dear Friend,

[...] You must excuse the brevity of these lines on account of my being excessively busy at present. I'll write more fully next time.
I am enclosing two cards and will let you know in my next letter which questions are to be dealt with at the public congress in Geneva at the end of May*.
Our Association has made great progress. It already has 3 official organs, one in London, *The Workman's Advocate,* one in Brussels, *La Tribune du Peuple,* one put out by the French section in Switzerland, *Journal de l'Association Internationale des Travailleurs, Section de la Suisse Romande* (Geneva), and in a few days time a journal is to be put out by the German-Swiss section, *Der Vorbote,* under the editorship of *J. P. Becker.* [...]
We have succeeded in attracting into the movement the only really big workers' organisation, the English *TRADE UNIONS,* which previously concerned themselves *exclusively* with the wage question.
With their help, the English society we founded to achieve UNIVERSAL SUFFRAGE (half of its Central Committee consists of members—working men—of our Central Committee) held a giant MEETING a few weeks ago, at which only working men spoke. You can tell what effect it had from the fact that the LEADERS of two successive issues of *The Times* were concerned with this MEETING. As regards my work, I am now busy 12 hours a day writing out the fair copy. I am thinking of taking the manuscript of the first volume to Hamburg myself in March and using the opportunity to see you. [...]

Your most sincere friend K. Marx

* The reference is to the First IWA Congress, later postponed to 3-8 September.

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Note. For the names that it has been impossible to identify better, unknown even to Bellamy-Saville ("Dictionary of Labour Biography", New Jersey 1972 - London 1987) and Maitron ("Dictionnaire biographique du mouvement ouvrier français", Paris, 1964-1967), we have placed a reference to the event in which they appear between brackets.

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David Borisovich Rjazanov *was born in 1870. As a nineteen-year-old student, he organised a Marxist circle in Odessa. Arrested, he was sentenced to five years' imprisonment and emigrated. In 1906, in Vienna, he started his study of the history of the First International. The first imperialist war saw him adopt an internationalist position. In 1917, on the outbreak of the Revolution, he returned to Russia and was appointed chairman of the St. Petersburg trade unions. Then, in 1924, he was charged with founding the Moscow-based Marx-Engels Institute, of which he was the director until 1931, the year in which the Stalinists removed him from all his offices. After this date, there is no longer any trace of his activities. He was probably silently eliminated at the time of the great anti-Bolshevik trials.*

On 28 September 1864, the International Working Men's Association was founded at a big meeting in London's St. Martin's Hall. Marx, as the head of its General Council, wrote its "Inaugural Address", the first real founding act of the organisation. He argued in it that *« [...] to conquer political power has [...] become the great duty of the working classes. [...] One element of success they possess — numbers; but numbers weigh in the balance only if united by combination and led by knowledge [...] ».*
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